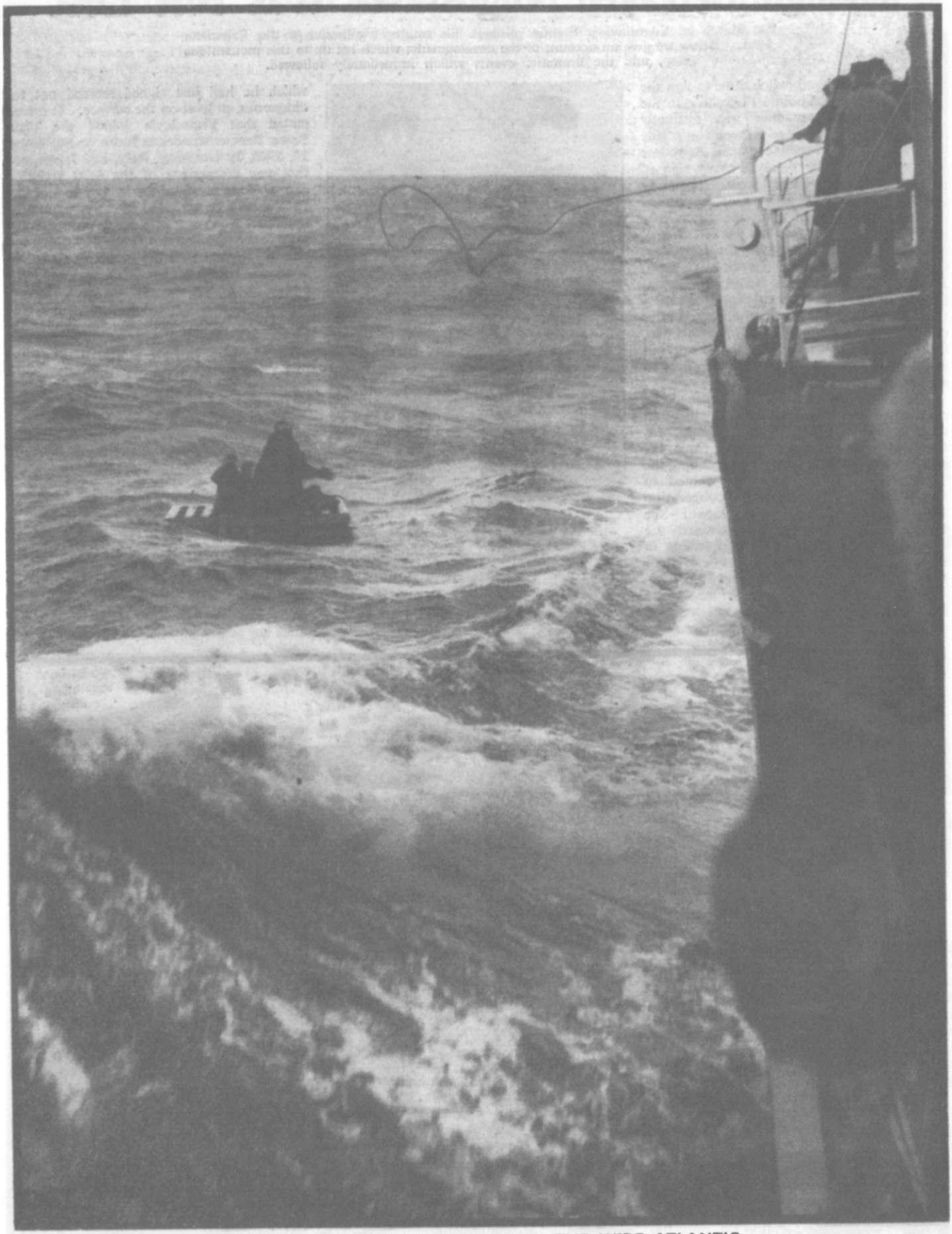


RESCUED AFTER SIX DAYS ADRIFT IN THE WIDE ATLANTIC

Wartime tragedy at its most poignant is exemplified in this photograph. The men are the survivors of a small merchant ship torpedoed in the Atlantic. Of the crew of twenty, ten managed to get on board a life-saving raft; the rest went down with the ship. The survivors drifted for six days on their frail craft with only a gallon of water and six tins of condensed milk on board. Two men were washed overboard, and two lost their reason and died. On the sixth day a British warship sighted the raft and, above, a life-line is being thrown to the men as the rescue ship comes alongside.

Photo Exclusive to THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

Though Betrayed Yugoslavia Was Not Lost

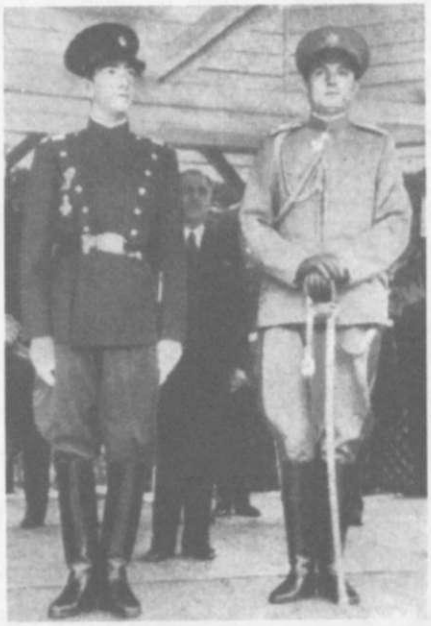
On March 25 Yugoslavia's Premier pledged his country's adhesion to the Tripartite Pact. Below we give an account of the developments which led up to this momentous step, and the dramatic events which immediately followed.

WHEN Mr. Tsvetkovitch came to sign the Pact which bound Yugoslavia to the Axis, his manner was distinctly *distrait*. As he stood at Ribbentrop's side in the glittering ensemble of the Belvedere Palace in Vienna he betrayed every sign of nervousness. His lips were constantly twitching, and time after time he pulled out his handkerchief and then hurriedly thrust it back again into his pocket. When, after Ribbentrop had signed for Germany, Ciano for Italy, and General Oshima, Japanese Ambassador in Berlin, for Japan, it came to Mr. Tsvetkovitch's turn, he forgot that he had to sign more than once and after every signature replaced the top of his pen, carefully repocketed it, only to take it out again immediately afterwards to continue to sign on the dotted line.

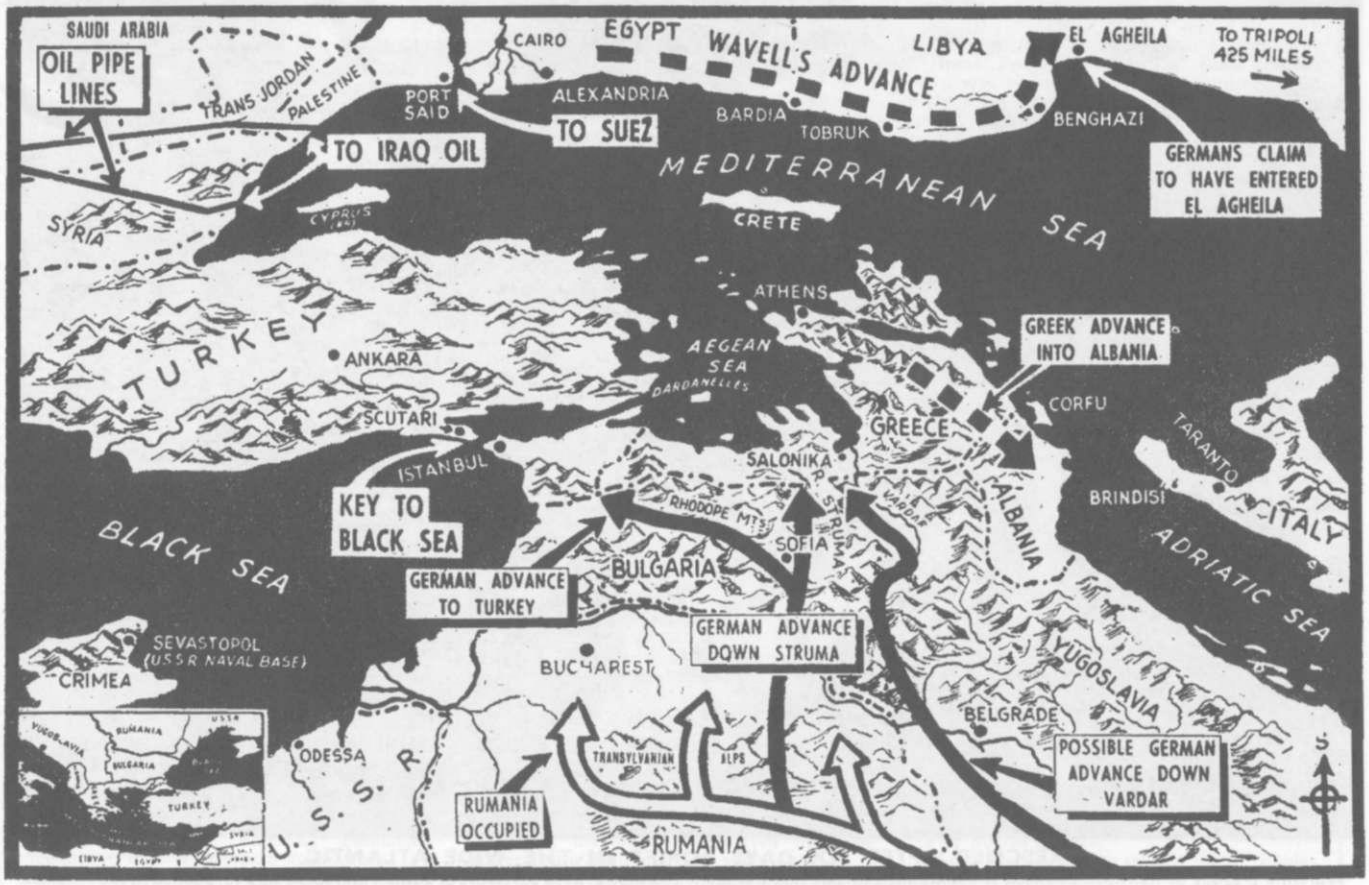
Then, when the writing was finished, he made a nervous little speech. The chief aim of Yugoslavia's foreign policy, he said, was the maintenance of peace for her people, the safeguarding of their security. In joining the Three Power Pact, Yugoslavia wanted to ensure her peaceful future in cooperation with Germany, Italy, and Japan. She wanted to contribute her share towards the organization of a new Europe, fulfilling in this way a supreme obligation both towards herself and the European community . . .

Prime Minister Tsvetkovitch had good reason to be nervous; was he not treading the path which the premiers of Bulgaria and Rumania had trodden so recently before him? Could he be certain that the fate which had befallen Yugoslavia's neighbours would not also be hers? True, the document which he had just signed seemed not too dangerous, at least on the surface. It merely stated that Yugoslavia joined the Three Power Pact, concluded in Berlin on September 27, 1940, by Germany, Italy, and Japan, and that any discussions of the joint technical commissions provided for in Article 4 of that Pact should be attended by Yugoslav representatives when any of Yugoslavia's interests were concerned. To this Protocol—which was almost identical with the Protocols signed by Slovakia, Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria, and was drawn up in German, Italian, Japanese and Serb—was attached the text of the Three Power Pact, by subscribing to which Mr. Tsvetkovitch and his Foreign Minister, Mr. Cincar Markovitch, agreed that Yugoslavia "recognizes and respects the leadership of Germany and Italy in the establishment of a new order in Europe, and of Japan in Eastern Asia" and, still more important, undertakes with them "to assist one another with all political, economic, and military means if one of the contracting parties should be attacked by a power at present not involved in the European war, or in the Sino-Japanese conflict."

After the Pact had been signed, Mr. Tsvetkovitch was handed two Notes bearing the signature of Joachim von Ribbentrop. In the first Germany's Foreign Minister declared that "the German Government reaffirms its determination to respect at all times the sovereignty and territorial integrity



KING PETER II of Yugoslavia is here seen (left) with the former Regent, his uncle, Prince Paul, at a review at Belgrade in 1940.
Photo, Associated Press



We are not accustomed to looking at a map of the Near East from this angle, but this is how Hitler sees it as he plans the next moves in his Balkan campaign. Open arrows show where German troops have occupied Rumania, while the black arrows show the directions of possible German advances against Greece through the Struma valley in Bulgaria and the Vardar valley in Yugoslavia. The importance of Turkey's attitude in the event of a German drive forward is shown by her position athwart the direct route to the Iraq oilfields. Inset, normal map of the area. *Courtesy of the "Daily Mail"*

Dramatic Reactions to the Pact with Hitler

of Yugoslavia ''; and in the second that "during the war the Governments of the Axis Powers will not make any demands on Yugoslavia to allow the passage or the transit of troops through Yugoslav territory.''

From an unguarded reference in this second Note to "conversations'' it was apparent that not everything which had been concluded between Yugoslavia and her new partners had been made public. There were secret clauses beyond a doubt; and in Belgrade it was openly declared what these clauses were believed to be. Thus it was said that one stated that after the war Yugoslavia's aspirations for an outlet on the Aegean Sea would be sympathetically considered. Another was alleged to be that Yugoslavia had agreed to allow the passage of war material and hospital supplies over her railways, without any right of control and without hindrance. Furthermore, it was stated that Yugoslavia had agreed to check all anti-Axis activity within her bounds, and that her national economy should be brought into harmony with the economic system of the German Reich.

Ribbentrop Talks of 'Intrigue'

Herr Joachim accompanied the gift of his two bits of paper with a speech in which he displayed even more than his customary Pecksniffian unctuousness. He declared—and none would gainsay him here—that "this event will be of a special importance to the future of Yugoslavia and the welfare of the Yugoslav people.'' The new order in Europe and East Asia was being carried through, he said; and then he went on to denounce a "crooked intrigue'' of England's destined to mobilize Yugoslavia against this new order. "Even in the last few days,'' he plaintively declared, "so I am told, attempts at interference have been made by English and American quarters in the politics of Yugoslavia—attempts which can only be described as unheard of, and which can in no way be reconciled with the respect due to the sovereignty of a free European state.''

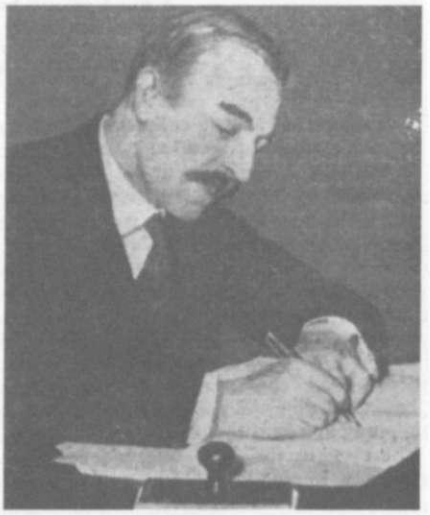
When the Yugoslav Premier heard that, did he give a thought to Schuschnigg, the last Premier of free Austria, who for three years had been a prisoner of Hitler, confined within a few hundred yards of where he sat on his gilded chair? But Mr. Tsvetkovitch can surely have needed no such reminder that whoever sups with Hitler needs a long spoon.

Before he left Belgrade for his trip to Vienna he had had to overcome a series of Cabinet crises. Several of his ministers had resigned by way of protest against the proposal to link Yugoslavia with the Axis; the newspapers—practically all of them save those which were under his Government's control—were strong in their condemnation; the Army was against it, the students, the great mass of the Serbian people, if not of the Croats. Several times it was stated that the Premier's train would leave Belgrade at a certain hour, only for the arrangements to be cancelled at the last minute; and even when the "betrayal train'' was just about to start at 10 p.m. on March 24, one of his ministers, Mr. Pantitch, Minister of Physical Education, thrust his letter of resignation into the Prime Minister's hands.

From abroad, too, came appeals to Yugoslavia to think not once but twice before she took a step which would certainly be fatal to her independence. The Greeks appealed to their old comrades in arms "never to let their glorious history be blackened by a stab in the back for an ally.'' The Turks uttered a strong warning; and Britain's Minister in Belgrade, Mr. Ronald Campbell, handed Mr. Tsvetkovitch a note in which it was stated that His Majesty's Government had been shocked to learn that Yugoslavia contemplated the signature of an agreement by which she not only abandoned her neutral attitude but apparently entered the system of Britain's enemies.

But the Yugoslav Government turned a deaf ear to every warning as to every entreaty. The plenipotentiaries signed, and on the morrow of their signature returned to a country seething with unrest. When their train drew up at the station platform in Belgrade at 9.4 a.m. on March 26, the station was empty save for pro-Nazis, and the ministers on their way to a long conference with Prince Paul, the Senior Regent, drove through silent streets—silent, although not empty. The mood of the people was tense, increasingly dangerous. The news was of meetings of angry protest, of rioting, of shootings. They had signed their country's capitulation to Hitler, and how the country regarded their action was soon seen.

At 2.30 on the morning of March 27 there was a dramatic coup d'état in Belgrade. The men who signed Yugoslavia's surrender were thrown out of office and placed under arrest, and the three Regents—Prince Paul, Dr. Stankovitch, and Dr. Petrovitch—resigned. Young King Peter assumed the direction of affairs, with General Dusan Simovitch, Chief of Air Force Staff, as his Prime Minister. The Yugoslav nation had, as Mr. Churchill said when he announced the news in London, found its soul.



MR. RONALD CAMPBELL has been British Minister in Belgrade since 1939, and, to quote Mr. R. A. Butler, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, handled the Yugoslav crisis "with the utmost discretion and the greatest skill.''

Rumania has already experienced what it means to bow the knee to the Axis. The long stretch of the Danube which forms the greater part of the frontier between that country and Bulgaria is now completely under Nazi control. This Nazi anti-aircraft battery is guarding one of the bridges across the river. *Photos, Planet News, Keystone, and Associated Press*

MR. DRAGISHA TSVETKOVITCH, who signed the pact with the Axis in Vienna on March 25, 1941, and was arrested two days later, became Prime Minister of Yugoslavia on February 5, 1939.

Long Live Greece, Free and Immortal!

A hundred and twenty years have passed since Greece threw off the Turkish yoke and declared her independence. In 1941 the anniversary was celebrated with much more than usual fervour, and in every country where men still love liberty and are prepared to defend it tribute was paid to the valour of the little country which is holding the pass against the Fascist hordes.

IN a mood of ardent enthusiasm coupled with stern resolution the Greeks celebrated on March 25 the 120th anniversary of their country's independence. In Athens the streets were gay with flags, but there were no soldiers to parade in the spring sunshine. The crowds on the pavements who watched the King and his sister, Princess Catherine, drive to the Cathedral were composed almost entirely of old men, women and children. The young men were all at the front, far away in the snowbound heights of Albania, keeping the pass as their fathers of long, long ago held the pass at Thermopylae.

But even in the front line Independence Day was honoured. The Greek soldiers roared out their National Anthem so that the Italians could not fail to hear, and followed it with a rendering of their favourite folk songs. They made little blue and white rosettes and stuck them in their rifles and machine-guns, and for their midday meal they had a double ration of meat. When the Italians delivered their usual attack they were repelled again as usual, but with even more than usual vigour, for the Greek soldiers knew, and the Greek people knew, that they were facing a crisis, what might be a supreme crisis, in their history. Bulgaria had fallen into the Nazi trap; Yugoslavia had just succumbed (or so it seemed) to Hitler's wiles; on Greece's frontier a great German Army was massed, and the drive to Salonika might start at any moment.

But on that day, at least, no great attack was delivered. The Germans still marked time; and as for the Italians, they were licking the wounds incurred in yet another ill-fated attempt. Following the complete repulse of the offensive of March 9-16—that offensive which was said to have been delivered under Mussolini's own eye, indeed to have been actually directed by him—General Cavallero had sent his men once again over the top. The story of the battle was given over the Athens radio on March 20. "The attack was as great in intensity as those of last week," said the announcer, "with the difference that it was not over such a wide front. Whatever hopes the Italians may have placed in this new move they were doomed to disappointment, for the offensive was completely crushed.

"The Greek forces stood up to this mechanized assault with the same cool determination as that which characterized their victorious resistance to the violent attacks a week ago. The tanks came forward first to open the way for the Italian infantry. Our anti-tank batteries immediately opened an intense and rapid fire. After the first few rounds one tank received a direct hit, which broke its chain and caused it to overturn. A few seconds later a second tank was shattered by another hit from our batteries. A third followed soon. All the other tanks turned about and fled.

WINTER IN ALBANIA imposed very severe conditions upon the Greek troops. The rough roads were frequently blocked by snowdrifts, and in the mountains ponies and mules were used as the surest means of transport. This pony is loaded with water barrels. A Greek soldier (inset) shelters in his tent. ***Photos, Bosshard, Exclusive to THE WAR ILLUSTRATED***

"Then came the turn of the Italian infantrymen, who had the courage not to imitate the ignominious example of their mechanized brothers. They came under the concentrated fire of the Greek artillery and the cross-fire of Greek machine-gunners. The losses of the Italians were terrific. As they came on in waves they were mown down in masses and the field was strewn with dead."

The announcer concluded with a comment on the part played by the R.A.F. "Another day of Mussolini's spring," he said, "has added more victory posies to Greek and British buttonholes."

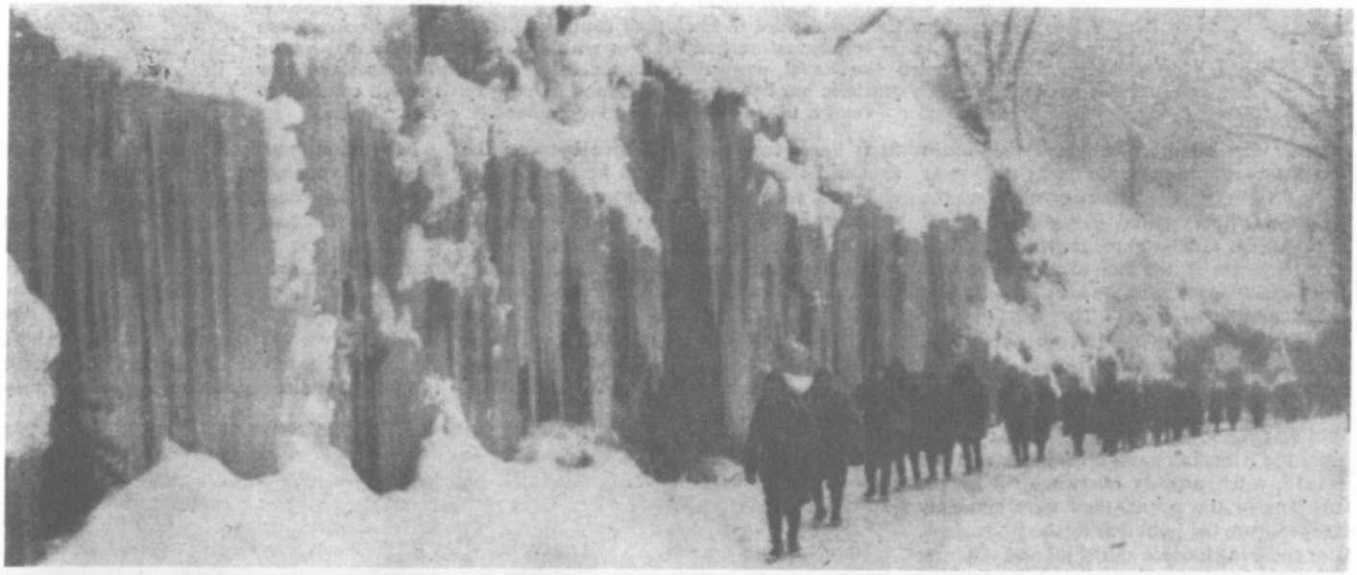
Upholding the Sacred Flame

In this critical hour there was never a sign of wavering in Greece. In an address to members of the Metaxas Youth Movement, the Premier, M. Koryzis, expressed himself in terms of the most forthright patriotism. Just as the Greek revolt in 1821 began the emancipation of Europe from the rule of the Turkish Sultans, so today, he declared, the Greeks believed that the present war meant the dawn of Europe's liberation from a mechanized tyranny. As it was in 1821, so it is in 1941. "The same divine spirit moves us," said M. Koryzis, "the same high moral ideals and faith in freedom and honour. At this hour, when new threats are discerned on the horizon, you shall swear to uphold the sacred flame."

In Britain, too, the anniversary of Greek Independence was celebrated with pride in the exploits of a most gallant ally. At a mass meeting in London, Mr. Amery, Secretary of State for India, paid tribute to the troops who had fought month after month with such grim resolution. "We are in this conflict with you to the end," he said, "and that end will be the assured victory of freedom and civilization." "On this day of proud memories," said Mr. Churchill in a special message, "I would add one brief tribute to those which the whole civilized world is paying to the valour of the Greek nation. One hundred and twenty years ago all that was noblest in England strove in the cause of Greek independence and rejoiced in its achievement. Today that epic struggle is being repeated against greater odds but with equal courage and with no less certainty of success. We in England know that the cause for which Byron died is a sacred cause; we are resolved to sustain it."

Again the German invasion of Greece was reported to be imminent. The Greeks replied by moving a large part of their army into Thrace. But Yugoslavia refused to be inveigled into the camp of her enemies.

Her Warriors Write in Blood a Glorious Epic



'I THANK YOU, GREEK WARRIORS'

King George of the Hellenes' Order of the Day to the Greek Fighting Forces

AFTER more than four months of fierce fighting against a numerically superior enemy, your heroic struggles with men and the elements have not only failed to exhaust you but have steeled your determination and endurance to an admirable degree. When the enemy for a week, after long and careful preparation, thought himself ready to break you and launched the violent offensive on which he based so many hopes, not only did you hold him, but you dealt him a severe blow, gave him a fitting answer, and taught him one more lesson of what Greek gallantry and courage are capable.

You Greek warriors won because the blood of the fighters of Marathon and Thermopylae flows in your veins. You have won because right is on your side and God and the Virgin have protected you. You are victorious because you have opposed the enemy's tanks and machines with breasts of steel and a will of granite. While you are writing in blood the glorious epic of the newer Greece on the snow-covered mountains of Epirus and Albania, your brothers of the Royal Navy and Air Force are also adding golden pages to Greek history by sea and air. The whole civilized world is watching with amazement the achievements of Greek arms.

Deeply moved by your feats of gallantry and full of fatherly pride, I thank you, brave Greek warriors, in the name of the Motherland. You may rest assured that every Greek conscience is inspired and guided by the unshaken determination to guard the honour and freedom of Greece at all costs.—*Athens, March 18, 1941*

ARCTIC WEATHER hampered the movements of the Greek troops during the winter of 1940-41 as the three photographs in this page show. In that at the top of the page, Greek troops are moving forward over wooded hills in which the trees are bowed down with snow. Centre, soldiers are in front of their fragile shelter, yet they make the best of it and have hung out their washing on a line to dry—or freeze. Despite the weather the wounded were well looked after, and, above, motor ambulances are seen on a snow-clad road. *Photos, Bosshard, Exclusive to* THE WAR ILLUSTRATED

Yugoslavia's Army in the Hour of Crisis

When the Yugoslav Cabinet decided to hitch their country to Hitler's star the Army was particularly loud in its condemnations, and it was with its ardent support that young King Peter assumed the Royal power. As this article reveals, the Yugoslav Army is not only intensely patriotic but has an efficiency and fighting spirit which combine to rank it next to Turkey's in the Balkans.

FOR many hundreds of years the South Slavs—the people who under the names of Serbs, Croats, Slovenes, make up the population of present-day Yugoslavia (Yugo: South)—have ranked amongst the finest and fiercest fighters in the Balkans. Theirs is a spirit which ages of Turkish domination proved unable to tame. They are men of high courage and of an intense patriotism. Their fighting capacity was proved beyond a doubt in the Balkan wars of 1912-13, when they defeated the Turks and Bulgarians. Still more was it shown in that disastrous retreat across the Albanian mountains in the autumn of 1915, when, already overwhelmed by the Austrians in the north, they were suddenly attacked from the right rear by the Bulgarians. After enduring terrible hardships and suffering enormous losses, a remnant of the Serbian army reached Salonika, where it soon took its place in the Allied front. In October 1918 it was again on the offensive, and in a few weeks it had recaptured all and more of the territory which had been lost. At that time it numbered some 65,000 combatants, but its battle casualties had exceeded 331,000, including 45,000 killed and over 133,000 wounded. It was a war record, indeed, of which any country might well be proud.

Serbia became Yugoslavia or, as it was called in those early days, the Triune Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, and the Serbian regiments found themselves grouped in the Yugoslav Army with regiments which in the late war had been fighting on the opposite side. They settled down well together, however, and the Croats in particular represented a considerable increase in military strength, for they had long been counted among the most efficient and hard-fighting of the troops under the command of the old Emperor Francis Joseph.

Every young Yugoslav who is physically fit is liable for military service between the ages of 21 and 50, although he spends only eighteen months with the colours—those months dating from the year in which his 21st birthday falls. In times of emergency men fit to carry arms may be called up for service between the ages of 17 and 21 and 50 and 55. The peacetime strength of the Yugoslav Army is about 130,000 men, though at the present time it is estimated that some million are under arms. With reserves, Yugoslavia could put, it is estimated, two million men into the field. In addition to the regular Army there is a body something akin to our Home Guard, but primarily a physical culture organization—the Sokols—whose membership numbers some 300,000. The total population of Yugoslavia, it may be mentioned, approaches 16,000,000—about 8,000,000 Serbs, 5,000,000 Croats, and a million and a half Slovenes, with Germans, Magyars and Macedonians making up the balance.

For military purposes Yugoslavia is divided into five army areas, each of which is subdivided into divisional areas and military districts. The first and most important army is centred about Belgrade, with its headquarters at Novisad. The second army is stationed in Bosnia and Dalmatia, and its H.Q. is at Sarajevo, where on that July day in 1914 Gavrilo Princip fired the shots which precipitated the first Great War. The third army is in the south, occupying the territory between Albania, Greece, and Bulgaria: its headquarters are at Skoplje. The fourth army is in the opposite corner of the country facing the frontiers of Italy and Germany, with its headquarters at Zagreb in Croatia. Then the fifth army, with its H.Q. at Nish, faces the Bulgarian frontier. The vitally important valleys of the Morava and Vardar are included in the zones of the fifth and third armies. The Army as a whole consists of 56 regiments, plus a regiment of guards in Belgrade, and another of fortress troops.

Under Yugoslavia's constitution the King is the supreme head of the Army, and the Army's loyalty to the Throne was shown beyond a doubt on March 27 when young King Peter deposed his uncle Prince Paul, and dismissed the pro-Axis Cabinet. The executive power is wielded by the Chief of the General Staff, who is at present General Peter Kositch, who is also tutor to young King Peter. General Milan Neditch has been called the Iron Man of the Army; he is a former Chief of the General Staff and resigned his office as Defence Minister last November because of the strong stand he had taken against the pro-Axis policy of the Government. He was succeeded by General Petar Peshitch, who, like Kositch and Neditch, is a veteran of the Great War. None of the Yugoslav war leaders is, indeed, a young man; Kositch is 60, Neditch is 59, and Peshitch close on 70.

YUGOSLAV INFANTRY advancing down a slope during large-scale manoeuvres. The leaves in their helmets provide an effective camouflage. Below, a machine-gun unit is ready for action. *Photos, Keystone*

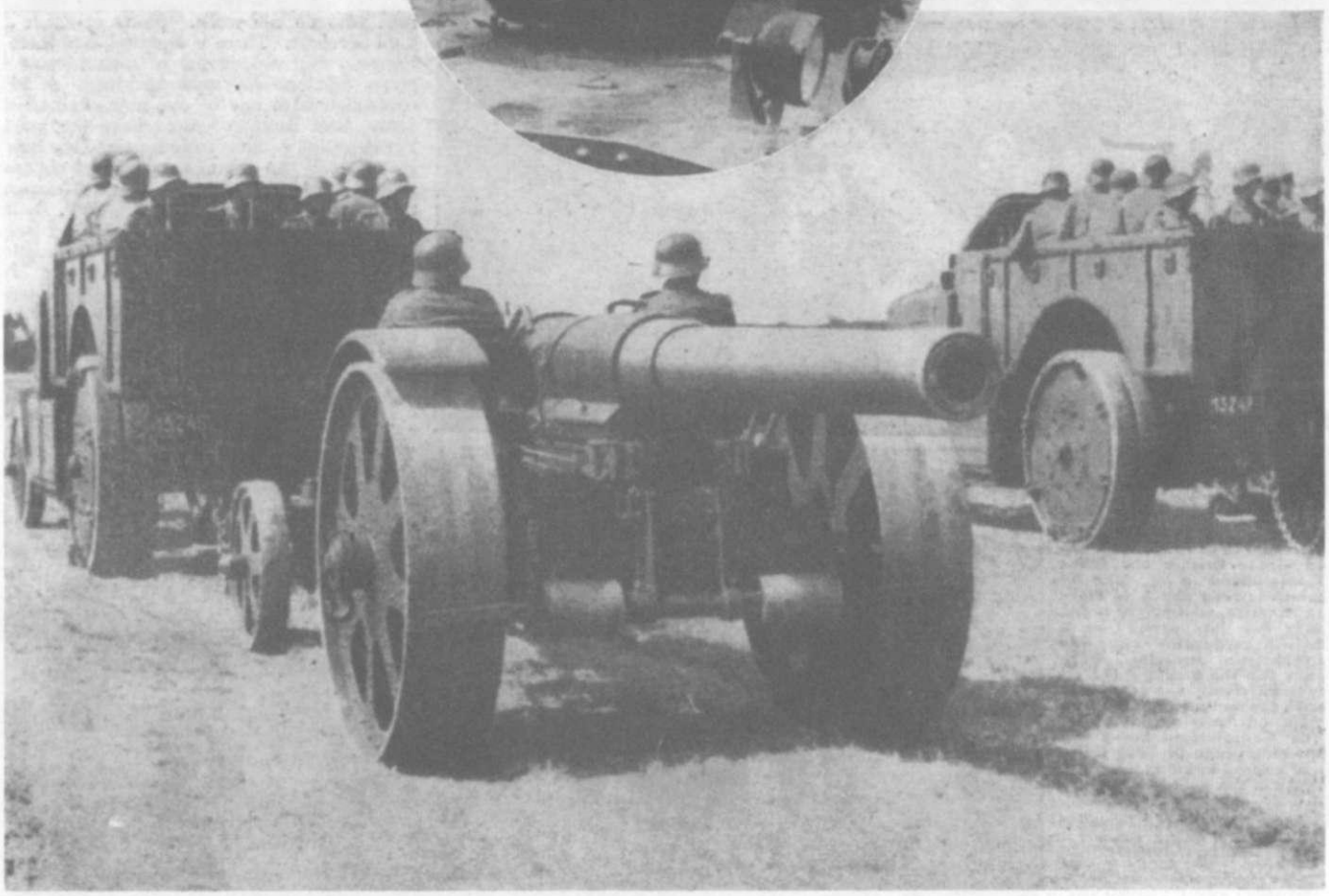
King Peter's Men Ready for Battle

A MILLION YUGOSLAVS were called up during the early part of March, and as the crisis developed took up their battle positions on the frontiers. Above, is seen a well-equipped motor-cycle detachment.

Photo, Keystone

The calling to the colours of Yugoslavs was described by the authorities as "Army manoeuvres." The driver of a light tank (circle) is seen receiving instructions. A heavy field gun (below) is being hauled by a motor tractor.

Photos, L.N.A. and Keystone

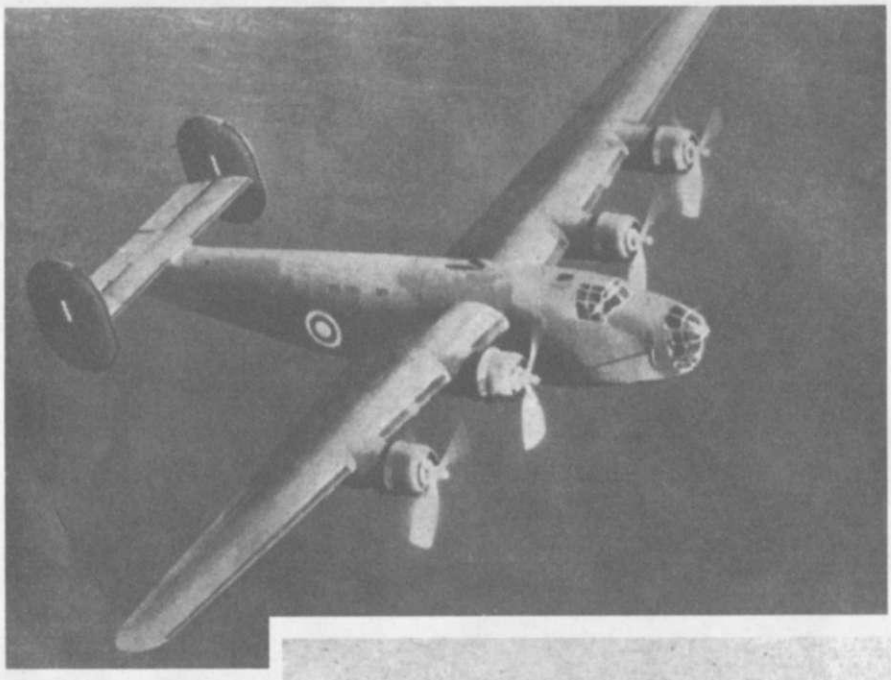


Here Are Some of 'the Boys in the Back Room'

AIR COMDRE. PATRICK HUSKINSON, Director of Armament Development, was formerly vice-president of the Ordnance Board at Woolwich Arsenal. He gained the M.C. while serving with the R.F.C. in 1916.

MR. W. S. FARREN, who has done great work in the design of the new 'planes, was an experimental engineer and pilot in the last war. In 1937, he became Deputy Director of Scientific Research at the Air Ministry.

MR. G. P. BULMAN, who "fastened on to" the Sabre engine, is a Civil Servant who before the war dealt with engine production for the Air Ministry. He is now with the Ministry of Aircraft Production.



LORD BEAVERBROOK, Minister of Aircraft Production, broadcasting on March 23, 1941, spoke of the new types of 'planes and engines either in manufacture or development. Then he went on :

"Now who is responsible for this work of development on which so much depends? I will tell you. It is the boys in the back room. They do not sit in the limelight, but they are men who do the work. Many of them are Civil Servants. There is Bulman, and there is Farren. But a long list of names could be given, and one day must be given. It is in connexion with one of our new engines, the Sabre, that Bulman should have our praise. For this Civil Servant fastened on to the Sabre. He took all the chances, certain of condemnation if he failed and with no great expectation of praise if he succeeded. Well, he has succeeded, so let us praise Bulman. I know that the designer is entitled to the highest credit ; history will give it to him. The manufacturer must be taken into account also, but it is the courage and foresight of Bulman that I wish to record now .... Air Commodore Huskinson is one of our leaders. He designs bombs. Big bombs, fat bombs, thin bombs, beautiful bombs. And he puts his heart into the job."

Amongst the first American bombers to be released for use in Great Britain are Giant Consolidated B 24s, one of which is seen above in flight in America, while right is one that has just arrived on a British aerodrome after delivery from America. Both they and the Boeing B 17 (Flying Fortress) are equipped with the famous Sperry bomb sight, an American invention. The Consolidated has a full working range of 3,000 miles and a speed of 335 m.p.h. The range of the Boeing is slightly less.

Photos, Planet News, Central Press, and British Official: Crown Copyright

Soon They Will Need a New Score Board

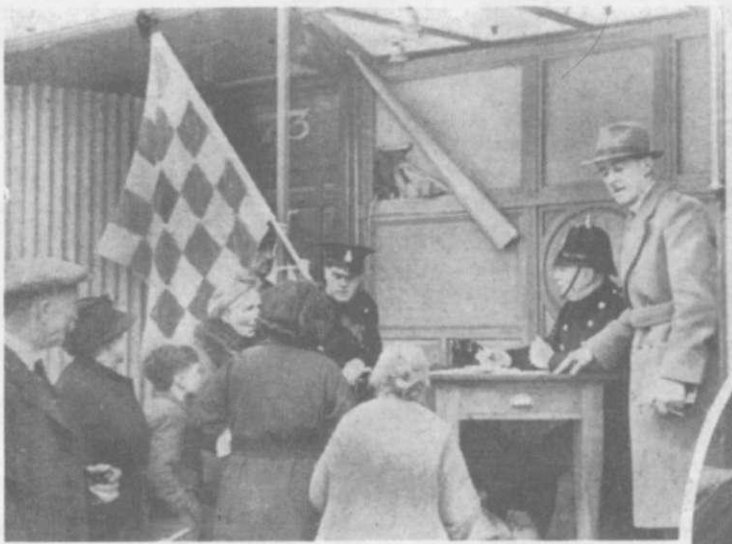
A TALLY OF VICTIMS destroyed by one redoubtable R.A.F. fighter squadron is kept on the propeller of a wrecked German aircraft and, as can be seen, takes the form of miniature swastikas. The bottom section shows the squadron's score in France; the centre shows the total shot down in daylight over this country. The squadron has recently taken over night fighting operations and its first "bag"—a Nazi bomber—is recorded in the top section. Two men in this group are wearing the new R.A.F. battle dress.

Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright

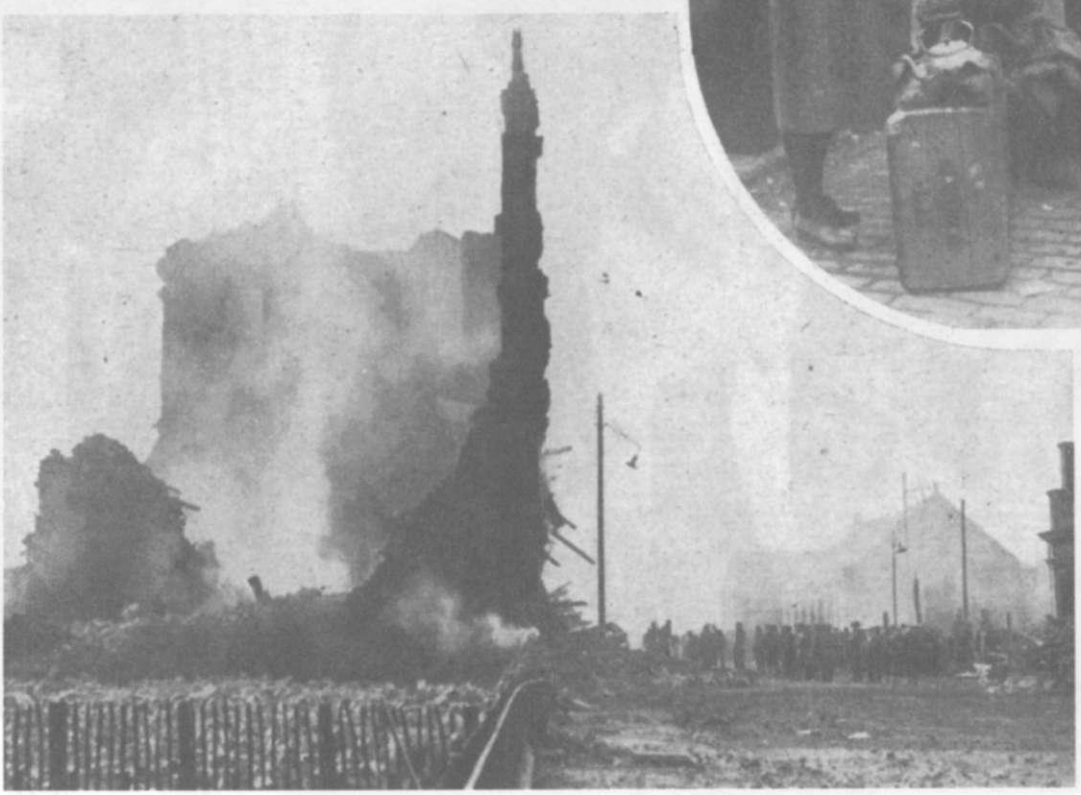
Of Course, the British People 'Can Take It'

PLYMOUTH was given a severe battering by Nazi bombers on the nights of March 20 and 21, 1941, as part of Hitler's campaign to put our principal ports out of action. But the spirit of Plymouth's people was undaunted, finding expression in a Union Jack fluttering above the ruins (right) and the oft-repeated wish: "Let the R.A.F. give the Germans what the Germans have given us." Mr. R. G. Menzies, who was in Plymouth during the raid, also bore witness to the growing tide of anger and wish that the Nazis should be given a dose of their own medicine. Below, at an Emergency Post in Plymouth the police are dealing with inquiries from those who have lost their all.

Photos, "News Chronicle"

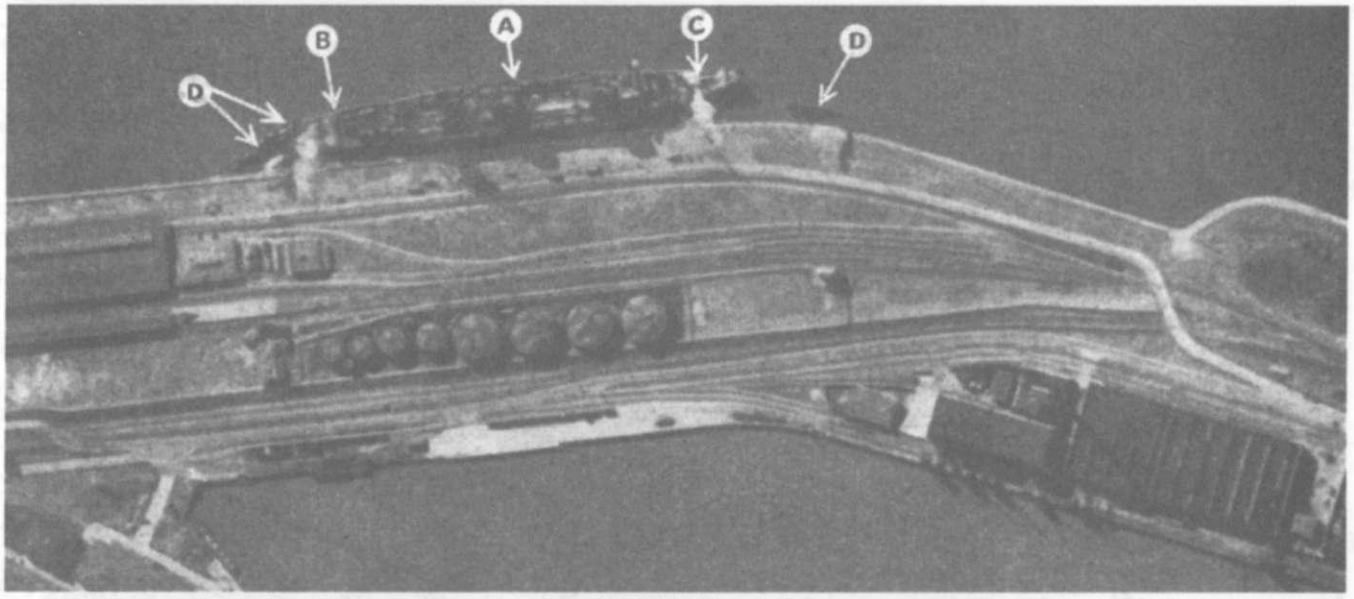


THE King has sent the following message to Viscountess Astor, Lady Mayoress of Plymouth, who was hostess to their Majesties when they visited Plymouth on Thursday, March 20, just before the first great raid: "After our happy day the Queen and I are deeply distressed to hear what you have all been through last night. Whatever the people of Plymouth may be called upon to suffer we feel quite certain the spirit of the West Country will rise above it all. God bless you all."

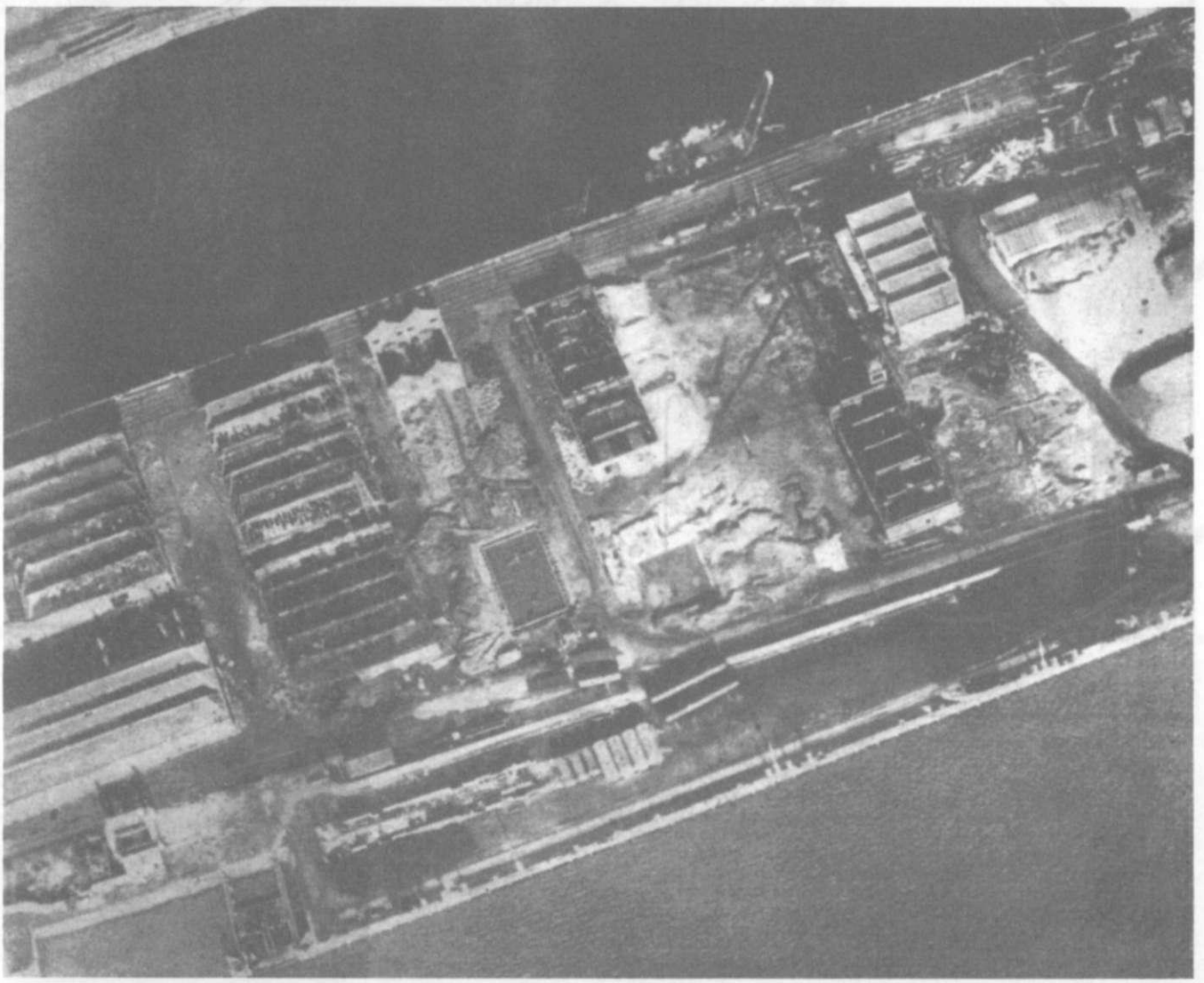


ON CLYDESIDE, as at Plymouth, the worst ruthlessness of the Nazi bombers fell upon working-class districts, where there were many such pitiful scenes as this. These women (above), bombed out, have collected a few of their belongings, but their only home for the moment is the street. The one bright spot is that they have managed to boil a kettle and make a cup of tea. Left, is one of the destroyed tenement houses. The next morning some of the former occupants stood by gazing at the smouldering ruins of their former homes. On Clydeside, as at Plymouth, the chief reaction was one of fierce determination to pay the Nazis back in their own coin. *Photos, Keystone*

But It's Full Time the Germans Took It Too!



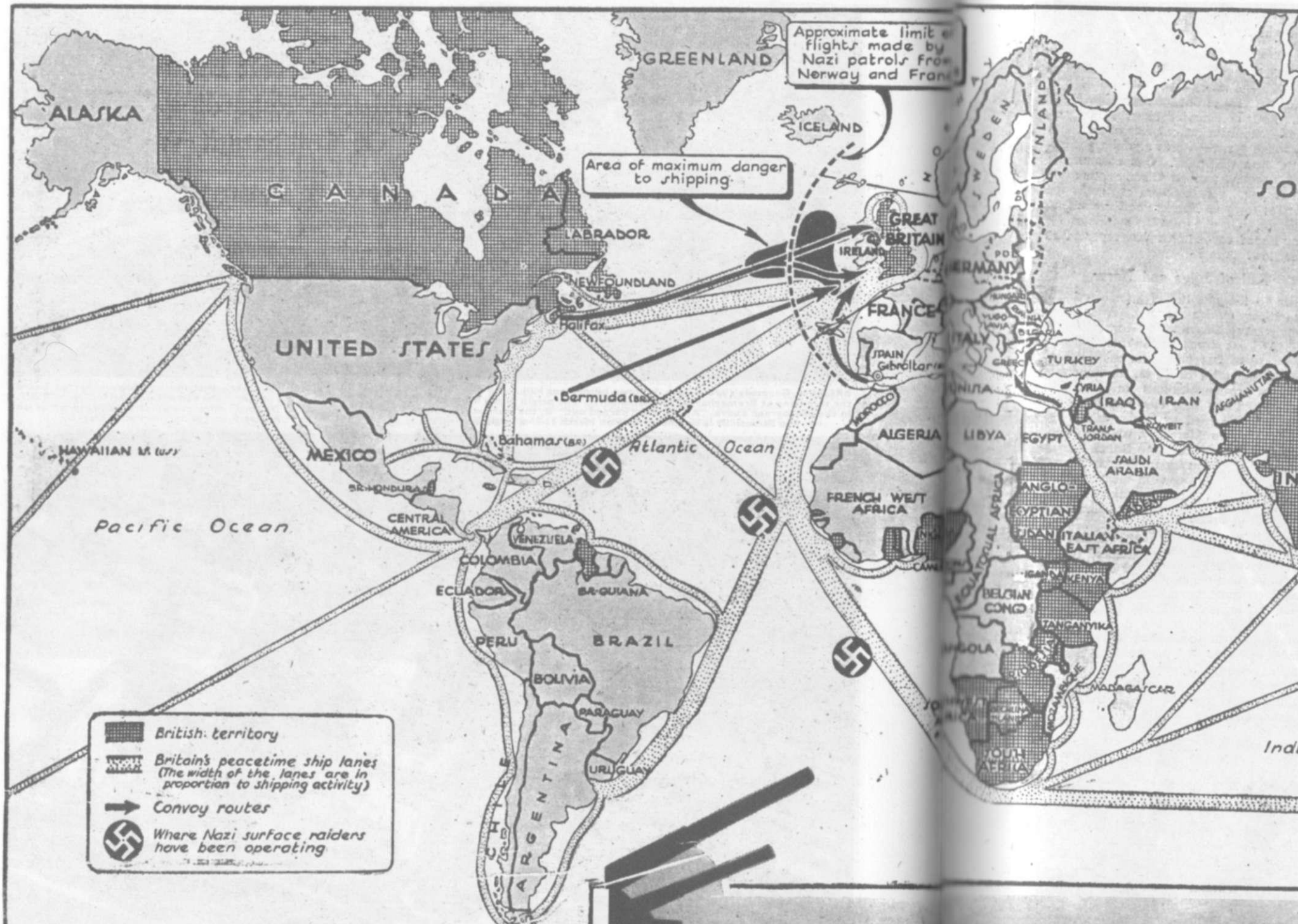
BREMEN, Germany's crack liner, is now a burned-out hulk. On March 17, 1941, a Nazi news agency announced that fire had broken out on board the ship lying at Bremerhaven, her home port. The origin of the fire was said to be unknown, but the extent of the damage was verified by the R.A.F. in the photograph above. A, the waist burned out. B, the stern still smoking. C, the bow on fire. D, small ships presumably pumping water on the flames. It is significant that on March 13-14 a single British 'plane bombed the docks at Bremerhaven as an alternative target.



OSTEND is one of the most important of the so-called invasion ports on the coasts of Belgium and France at which the Nazis have assembled barges and other small craft for the long-threatened but oft-postponed invasion of Britain. It has therefore been the object of particular attention from the bombers of the R.A.F. This photograph, taken from a reconnaissance 'plane, shows the Bassin de la Marine with its rows of warehouses completely gutted after the visits of the R.A.F.

Photos, British Official: Crown Copyright

Not All Hitler's Might and Malice Will Succeed in Cutting the Life-lin



Closing in On the Italians in Abyssinia

Steady progress all along the line at a fast-increasing pace—that was the position in the East African war zone as the rainy season drew near. Below we review the outstanding developments of the campaign.

WHERE will General Cunningham spend Easter? Lord Croft, Joint Under-Secretary for War, in his speech in the House of Lords on March 25, suggested that the General seemed anxious to spend Easter with his brother the Admiral, the Commander-in-Chief of our fleet in the Mediterranean. "Starting with high velocity from the Indian Ocean," his columns of West and East African troops had swept through Italian Somaliland, and were now nearly 300 miles over the Abyssinian border. They were already approaching Harar and threatening the Jibuti railway. They had advanced 770 miles from the Kenya frontier, and some 1,100 miles from railhead. Surely, said Lord Croft, this must be a world record of distance covered in so short a time.

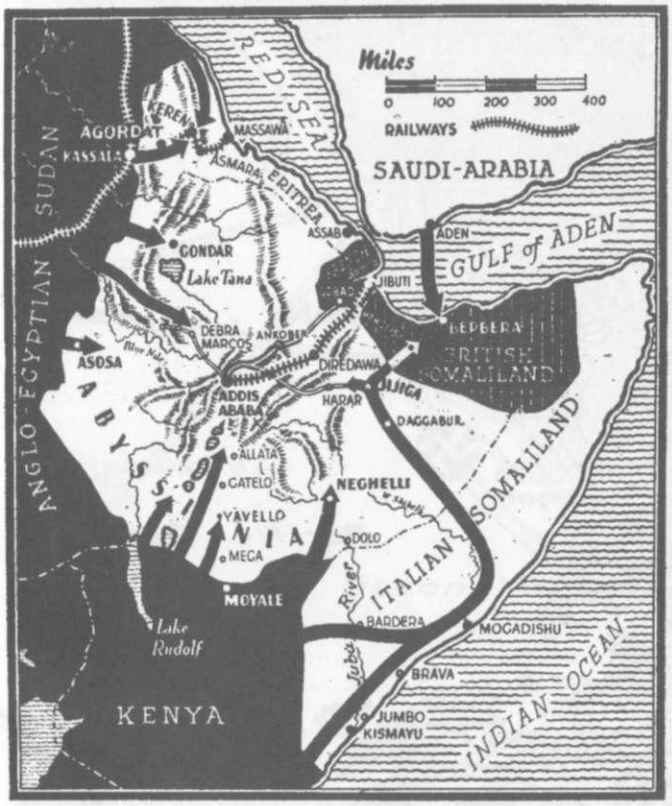
Then, referring to the campaigns in Africa as a whole, he spoke of the "glorious succession of victories" on so many fronts. "The astonishing story of the comradeship in arms of free citizens of the British Empire, drawn from all contingents and fighting with such fixity of purpose, such wonderful valour, skill and cooperation, is the vindication of British, Dominion and Empire rule. Hitler and Mussolini thought that they had only to hit us below the belt and the Empire would fall to pieces; instead, the whole British Empire has fallen upon its enemies like one man in a phalanx of freedom and faith."

Still referring to the fighting in both North Africa and East, Lord Croft announced that our casualties had been surprisingly small. Up to February 23 they totalled only 2,966, of whom happily only 604 were killed. On the other hand, we had inflicted over 200,000 casualties on the enemy, 180,000 of whom had been taken prisoners.

While from Libya there was practically nothing of importance to report—the only news was a story from Berlin of the occupation of El Agheila, in the desert between Benghazi and Tripoli, by a "German Africa Corps"—on other fronts in Africa the battle continued, always with heavy losses to the Italians. There was not a front on which they were not retreating—not one, save at Keren, their stronghold in Eritrea, which they defended with desperate valour. But even at Keren the British columns were drawing ever nearer to the central fortress, creeping up the frowning precipices, storming one by one the beetling pinnacles, and on March 27 Keren, too, was taken by the British.

Far to the south a column of General Platt's men was heading straight for Gondar, the ancient Abyssinian city in which the Italians had congregated their women and children from over a wide area; about the middle of March they deemed it advisable to withdraw them hurriedly by 'plane to Addis Ababa, another of these cities of refuge (the others were Asmara in the north and Jimmu in the south). Another hundred miles or so to the south a third column of Imperial troops, allied with large contingents of Abyssinian Patriots, was struggling to enter Debra Marcos. Here Italian resistance was stubborn, and their positions seemed to be fairly strongly held. To the south-west, Anglo-Belgian troops captured Asosa and continued their march towards Addis Ababa, some 200 miles to the east.

From the Kenya front the news was equally good. Four columns of Imperial troops—African units from the colonies of East and West—were pressing north across a practically trackless wilderness. One column was reported to have reached Allata, another was at Yavello; yet another captured the important town of Neghelli and pressed on northward. On this front the morale of the enemy troops encountered was reported to be very low.



ADDIS ABABA is the goal of the advancing British armies in Abyssinia. The capture of Jijiga by South African troops threatened the Addis Ababa-Jibuti railway, the Italians' life-line to the coast, and cut the main road from Berbera to the Abyssinian capital. This map shows the British lines of advance.

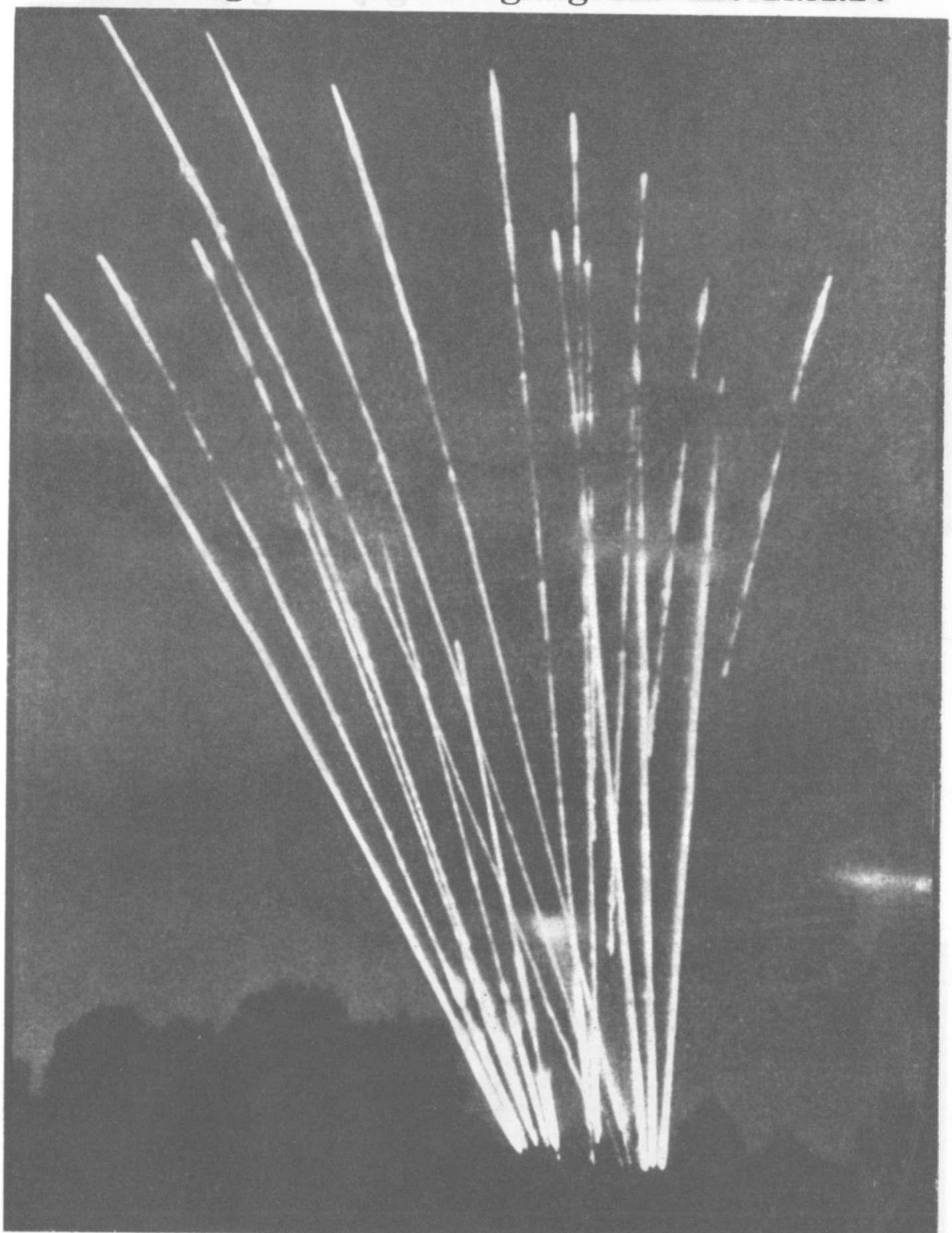
Fall of Jijiga and Harar

Then to the east Italian Somaliland was now under British control. After their triumphs at Kismayu and Mogadishu the South Africans struck northwards along the desert road to Daggabur, and on March 17 occupied the town of Jijiga, an important centre of communications in south-east Abyssinia. From here one column turned west along the road to Harar, whose fall was reported on March 27, while a second marched north-eastward into British Somaliland, reaching Hargeisa on March 20, and sped onwards to join up with their comrades advancing from the newly retaken Berbera. Soon the whole of British Somaliland was once again in British hands.

Thus from every side the Italians in Abyssinia were now being attacked day by day; the country under their control grew ever more narrow as the British columns pressed on and the tide of rebellion rose higher and higher. Militarily they were in an impossible position, and if the Duke of Aosta continued the war it was probably because he hoped that the April rains would bring a period of respite. That may well have been his hope. General Cunningham's intention was that that hope should be disappointed.

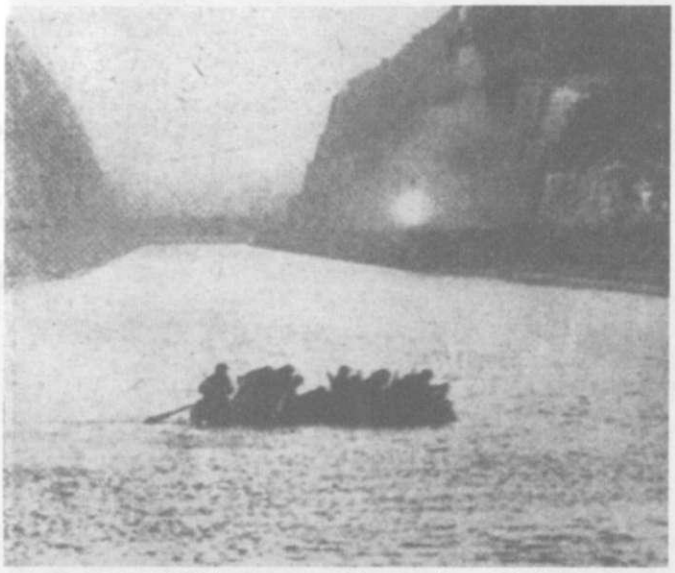
ABYSSINIAN PATRIOTS, who were trained in Kenya by a British Military Mission in their revolt against the Italians, were led into Abyssinia by British officers. Here an officer is seen talking to Patriots. **See also Vol. 4, page 118.** *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

'Flaming Onions' Flung Against the R.A.F.

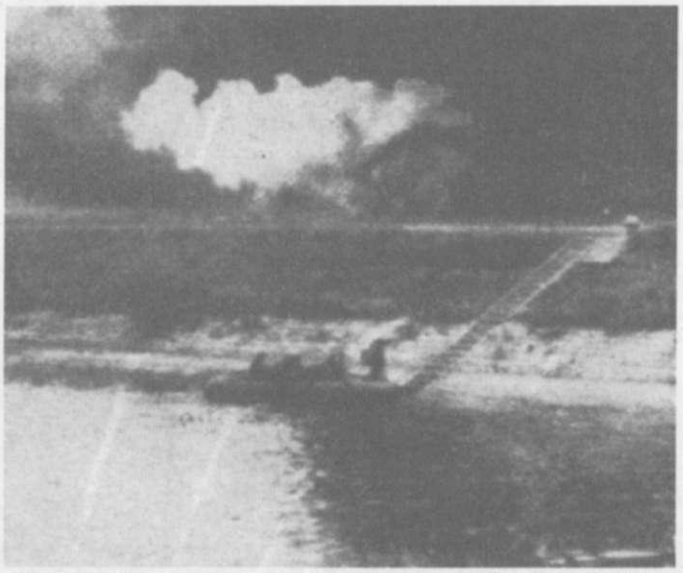


Like a sheaf of rockets these "flaming onions" are going up into the German sky. They are part of Germany's air defences and were photographed from a raiding British 'plane. They are not new, for they were used in the last war, primarily with a view to setting fire to aircraft. Two projectiles strung together go hurtling into the air leaving a trail of fire, but though at first sight they seem alarming they are not as deadly as they appear to be, for they do not reach to any great height and are erratic in aim. *Photo, Keystone*

Stills from the Nazi 'Bogey Bogey' Film



FORT EBEN EYMAEL, most powerful and modern of the Belgian forts, considered before the war to be almost impregnable, is blasted by fire from shells and mines while shock troops paddle furiously across the Albert Canal under cover of heavy protective fire.

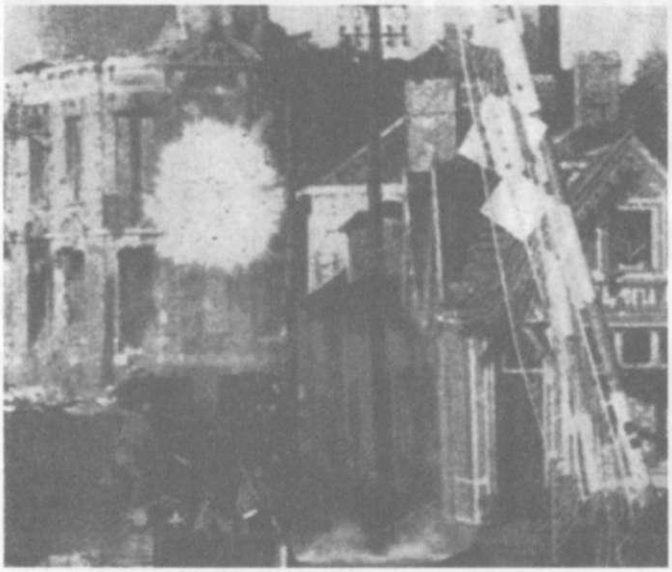


A party of Germans is here seen landing on the farther bank of the Albert Canal, while a protective smoke screen hides their movements from the defenders. So thoroughly had the attack been planned that the fortress was obliged to capitulate on May 11, 1940.

Nazi engineers are using flame-throwers, preparing the way for the German infantry to capture pill-boxes and blockhouses in the system of enemy fortifications.

"SIEG IM WESTEN" (Victory in the West), the Nazis' new propaganda film, stills from which are here reproduced, is designed to hearten the German people and impress whatever neutrals are left to be impressed. A sequel to "Campaign in Poland," which was widely shown in neutral countries to persuade those reluctant to side with the Nazis how all-powerful was German might, the new film depicts the "blitzkrieg" of 1940 in Western Europe. Von Papen showed it to Turkish politicians at the German Embassy on the day Mr. Eden arrived in Ankara, but it failed to cow representatives of a race renowned for their fighting qualities, and the success of Mr. Eden's mission was in no way jeopardized.

One of the many army cameramen detailed to make this film is here seen following up the fighting. More than twenty of these soldier-cameramen were killed at their work.



A GERMAN ASSAULT GUN is firing a 4-inch shell at point-blank range against a house in which soldiers have been defending a road. The heavy armoured shield enables the crew of the gun, which is mounted on caterpillar tracks, to advance heedless of rifle and machine-gun fire.

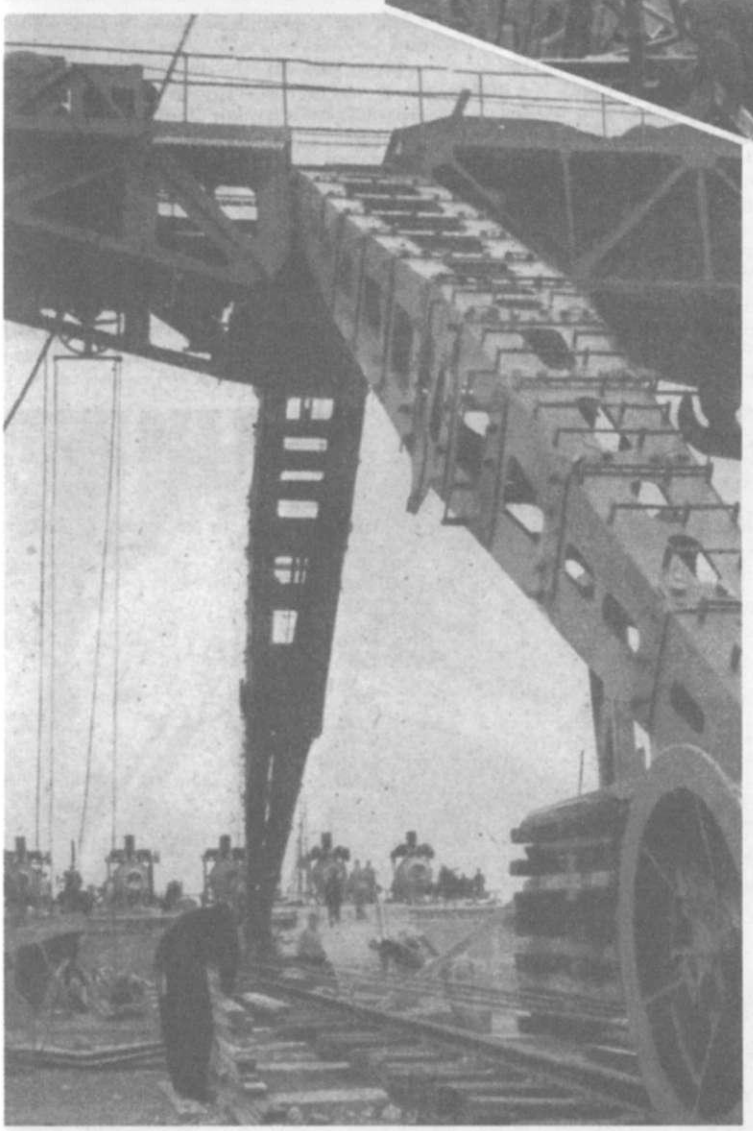
The assault is then carried forward. The gun rumbles ahead, supported by Nazi assault troops armed with light machine-guns, to go into action once again at the next centre of resistance, which, in turn, will be blasted out of existence by point-blank shell fire.

Hitler's 'O.T.' Men On the Job

DR. FRITZ TODT, who has designed the Nazi forts on the French coast, was born in 1891 and became Inspector-General of Roads in the Reich in 1933.

Batteries of guns along the coast of occupied France are preceded by batteries of machines such as this, a series of giant concrete mixers which daily pour out hundreds of tons of concrete—a material in great demand for modern fortifications.

GERMANY has a great body of labourers, military in everything but name, known as the "Organization Todt," generally shortened to O.T. The name comes from its head, Dr. Todt, who is the Nazis' Concrete Engineer Number One, for he built the great German motor roads and the Siegfried Line, which, he boasted, was impregnable, When the great Nazi push of May 1940 came the O.T. was called upon for strenuous labour with and behind the fighting men. As the French retreated it had to clear up the damage done, re-open the roads for the streams of military traffic, rebuild bridges, fill in shell and bomb craters, clear away masses of rubble and get works and factories going again. It is proudly boasted by the Nazi propagandists that between May 10 and June 10, 1941, a single Front Labour O.T. Command maintained some 1,000 miles of roads, repaired 22 bridges, constructed 5 new bridges, and filled 58 large craters and many smaller ones. A bridge in Northern France 55 feet long and 20 feet wide is said to have been built by 35 men of the O.T. in 45 hours. Their most recent work has been the construction of forts along the French coast.



Machinery of all sorts plays a vital part in the work of the "Organization Todt." After the concrete mixers come the giant cranes, such as that above, to lower the guns and other equipment into position. A few days later the brown-clad workers, such as those right, seen using an excavator, disappear and leave only an inconspicuous mound covering a new fort.

These particulars of the O.T. and the photographs in this page are from "Facts in Review," a magazine of Nazi propaganda published by a German agency in New York

British Tanks Are as Tough as Their Crews!

Originally a British invention and first used by the British Army with devastating effect in the last war, the tank has now become part of the equipment of every modern army. Yet still today British tanks take the lead—in spite of all Nazi trumpetings to the contrary—because of their fine quality and the splendid spirit of the men who man them.

FROM Libya, from Eritrea, from Somaliland—from all the fronts on which the British land forces have been in action—come heartening reports of the fine qualities of the British tanks; qualities made the most of by the skill and endurance of their crews. Through terrific Italian fire, such as no infantry could have penetrated, over sandy wastes and across boulder-strewn country covered with outcrops of rock, these British tanks have pressed forward relentlessly, smashing their way to victory and pulverizing the defences of Italy's crumbling empire.

That British tanks are tough a few incidents of the recent campaign will show. One tank, which received a direct hit from an Italian field gun, showed only a short crack in the armour plating; another was immobilized for a few minutes with clutch trouble in the middle of a battle right in front of the Italian lines. Machine-gun bullets drummed a tattoo upon its sides, grenades blew off the searchlights, and a 65 mm. gun was trained upon it, yet the only part penetrated was where a bullet smashed the tough glass in the aperture in front of the driver.

Two army officers, members of the Royal Armoured Corps who had shortly before been engaged in the Libyan fighting, recently visited a British tank factory. Then they knew why their tanks were so tough. Every tank made in this great Ministry of Supply factory—and this applies, of course, to all our tank factories—has to undergo various and stringent tests. This, British workmanship aiding, has enabled our tanks to pass the most stringent test of all—the battering of enemy guns.

One of the officers, describing a great tank battle near Benghazi, told how our tank forces were outnumbered by an Italian force which included seventy heavy tanks. The battle continued throughout the day, and the Italian heavy tanks were reduced to about thirty effectives. Then reinforcements arrived to complete the Italian defeat. In that fierce engagement the British casualties amounted to only two killed and five injured. "But," continued the officer, "we couldn't have done it if you fellows who had been making the tanks and the armour had not been doing your jobs damned well . . . it was by using British tanks made of British steel that we got the better of them." As one factory worker commented: "It makes you feel you're doing something worth while when you hear that the blooming tank you worked on helped to win a battle."

Six Thousand Separate Parts

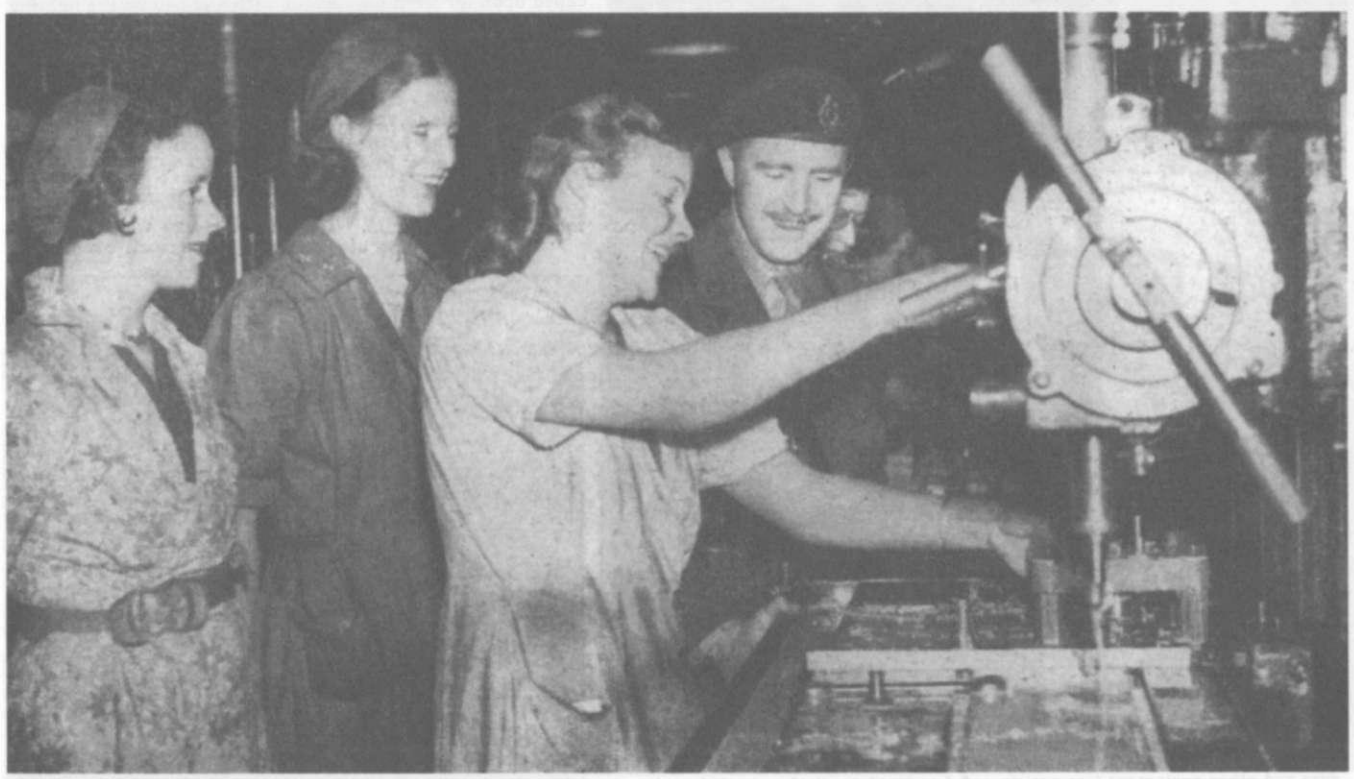
Moreover, the making of a tank is a highly complicated job. As many as 6,200 separate parts go into the completed structure of some of them, and these parts require about 50,000 different machining and assembling operations. In this one factory over 500 different machine tools are used in the course of these operations, for some of which an accuracy of one ten-thousandth of an inch may be necessary.

In this sphere, as indeed in every sphere of Britain's colossal factory effort, British workmanship has shown itself to be in a class apart, and General Wavell's own words are sufficient proof: "Weight for class," he has written, "Italian tanks, many of them newly delivered from manufacturers, proved no match for British products." He added: "As a further tribute to British workmanship it is noteworthy that our long-range desert patrols have now covered a total distance of half a million miles without loss of a single vehicle from mechanical breakdown."

One of the officers visiting the factory described three types of Italian tanks he had encountered, two medium and one light. The first Italian medium tank had a good gun, but owing to its short traverse its fire was largely ineffective; also the sides of the tank were thinly armoured. The second medium type was, he said, an excellent armoured fighting vehicle with an all-round traverse. But the Italian light tank he described as a miserable little affair which stood no chance against even our lightest tank.

Then one of the workmen wanted to know whether our British tanks had proved superior to German tanks. Swift came the reply from one of the officers, who had taken part in the fighting in France. "Definitely, yes," he said.

Heavy tanks for assault, light tanks for reconnaissance and patrol work, armoured cars and Bren gun carriers; all our mechanized equipment has been made by an army of British workmen who are determined that those who are using the weapons they forge shall never be let down by their comrades in the factories of Britain.



ARMAMENT WORKERS in many factories have recently had visits from the men who have been in action with the 'planes, tanks and guns they have produced, and have been encouraged to greater efforts by the stirring stories told to them. The officer above is talking to a worker in a tank factory in the Midlands. He had been in action against the Italians in Libya and praised highly the superiority of British tanks, due to British workmanship. As he put it: "A split pin may mean the difference between standing up and going down." *Photo, G.P.U.*

At Home and At the Front They Show Their Paces

Many a picturesque village in East Anglia has become accustomed to strange and noisy visitors disturbing its ancient peace when army training is in progress, and streams of tanks, lorries and cars thunder along the narrow lanes. Left, a medium tank of the type that is being turned out in an incessant stream from factories such as that seen in page 378 has drawn up by the roadside with a scout car behind it.

A factor which has enabled British tanks in action to stand up to heavy fire is the quality of their armour plating.

Right, a tank of a slightly different type from that shown in the top photograph has drawn up in a small town in the South of England, where it was engaged in rounding up parachute troops supposed to have landed on the downs. In the Western Desert light tanks, performing the task once allotted to cavalry, have dashed forward at an almost incredible speed. Above, a squadron of them, each with a place name beginning with an A, is on patrol. A searchlight can be seen mounted on each of these tanks.

Photos, British Official : Crown Copyright

OUR SEARCHLIGHT ON THE WAR

What Nazi Slavery Costs

THE German occupation in western Europe is costing the territories in question the gigantic sum of £1,050,000,000 per year by direct levy, the greater part being exacted not in money but in kind. Details of how this total is apportioned were recently given in Parliament by Mr. Butler, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and are shown in the following table, where the sterling equivalents are based on rates of exchange obtaining before the occupation.

	Total	Per head of population
	£	£
Norway	68,000,000	25
Denmark	26,000,000	8
Belgium	75,000,000	8
Holland	54,000,000	6
France	827,000,000	20

There is also a great deal of widespread unofficial looting, of both produce and livestock, which the inhabitants are helpless to prevent lest a worse fate befall them. But this is not the whole of the burden laid upon the hapless people. The amount of goods sent to Germany is greater than what is received in return, and this surplus is paid for in blocked marks, from which no credit is ever likely to be derived. Although smaller now that there is so much less to export, the annual loss from this source is still about £100,000,000 a year. The estimated burden upon the western occupied territories thus reaches a grand total of £1,150,000,000.

Germany Returns to Tangier

ON March 15 the Spanish authorities gave notice that they were about to eject the Mendoub of Tangier, and the following day this was done. By the Convention of 1923, signed by the Governments of Britain, France and Spain, Tangier was created a permanently neutralized international port, under the sovereignty of the Sultan of Morocco. The Mendoub was the Sultan's representative. Even when, last December, the Spanish Government suddenly took over the administration of Tangier from the International Committee of Control, the Mendoub's authority was not challenged. On March 17, the day after the ejection, his official residence, the Mendoubia, was handed over to the German Consul with a good deal of ceremony, General Asensio, High Commissioner for Spanish Morocco, inspected the guard of honour in which were included a few Italian Blackshirts, and then made a flowery speech in which he said that the handing-over was not only a gesture of friendship towards Germany but an act of justice as well. The Swastika flag was hoisted, the German and Spanish national anthems played, and then the company proceeded to a banquet at the Rif Hotel, given by Herr Heberlein, Counsellor of the German Ambassador in Madrid. An inspired report from La Linea that the British Consulate in Tangier was to be closed, and that British residents had been ordered to leave Morocco, was denied in London on March 24.

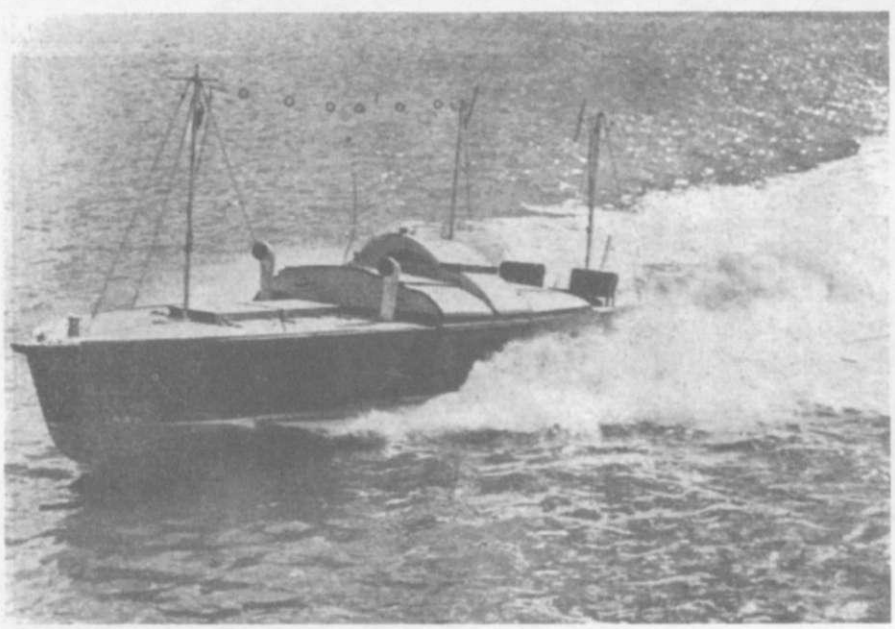
WOMEN OF THE A.T.S. now wear a coloured field service cap with walking-out dress. The new headgear, two examples of which are seen here, has replaced the peaked cap. It is beech brown with leaf green piping. *Photo, Planet News*

'Vilna' Squadron Takes the Air

A NEW unit of the R.A.F. Fighter Command made its first patrol at dawn on March 24. It is a large squadron and its entire personnel, both flying and ground staff, is Polish, with the exception of the British commanding officer and two British flight-commanders. The average age is 23, the average keenness 100 per cent. Many of the pilots have had between 2,000 and 3,000 hours of flying experience. As members of British squadrons, with whom they have been completing their training, these Polish airmen have already accounted for 25 German aircraft, and one sergeant pilot was recently awarded the D.F.M. The name of the new Hurricane squadron is "Vilna."

Boats Built to be Bombed

HIGH-SPEED armoured target boats, in use by the R.A.F., have been built for this purpose by a famous British constructor of racing craft. He was faced with the problem of combining a very high turn of speed with such armouring as would protect the crew and vital parts from the impact of light bombs. The result is an ingenious compromise. The three members of the crew and the controls are placed amidships, and are hooded with stout armour plate mounted on rubber buffers. The rest of the hull, which is left without protection, is packed with a special buoyant substance called onazate, which is only one-fifth the weight of cork. Practice bombs, even though dropped from a height of several miles, strike harmlessly against the armour plate. If they hit the hull they pass right through it without making the boat unseaworthy. The crew are safeguarded by masks against the fumes of bursting bombs. The target boat is driven by triple 100 h.p. engines, each actuating a separate propeller.



R.A.F. TARGET SPEEDBOATS are 40 feet in length and are armoured so that hits by light bombs will not inflict damage to crew or vital parts. Here is one of them travelling swiftly through the water. It carries a radio to enable the crew to communicate with the "enemy" attacker. *Photo, British Official: Crown Copyright*

Let Bullying be Unconfined!

NORWAY'S Quisling Government has given the Nasjonal Samling Party carte blanche to make whatever reprisals they like against anti-Quisling Norwegians, with the assurance that no legal proceedings will be taken against them. Members of the Party complained that they were constantly being subjected to abuse and assault. Quisling's "Hirdmen" also harboured a grievance in that they had no authority to make arrests. Now both grievances are removed, for vengeance may be taken on the population without interference by the police. But the Norwegians are a spirited race in spite of incessant bullying. The authorities of Oslo University have threatened to close it if the Quisling Commissar for Education does not put an end to interference with university teaching.

Fortune Smiles on the Trawlers

GONE are the days when the herring-fishers of our coasts were unable to dispose of their hardly won catch because nobody wanted it. Today trawlermen are making so much money that they are not only refurnishing their homes, but contributing liberally to the Red Cross and putting thousands of pounds into war savings. This prosperity is not due to a spectacular rise in wages, but to the present demand for fish, which has altered to an unprecedented degree the value of their individual shares in the catch. The lowest paid member of a trawler's crew can now make a sum during one trip that works out at over £1 a day. A mate's daily earnings average £5, while those of a skipper may equal the salary of some Cabinet Ministers. One boat fishing in home waters recently disposed of its mixed catch for the record sum of £4,824. A big Iceland trawler, with the enormous catch of 36,000 stones, sold it for £19,000. No wonder that the "penny herring" now sounds like a myth

Honours for Lion-hearted Civilians

MISS M. E. WHITE

Given the British Empire Medal for remaining alone at her post at the village telephone exchange of Kirby Muxloe, near Leicester, when it was heavily bombed. Doors and windows were blown in and Miss White was showered with glass. This happened at 8 p.m., but at 7 a.m. next day she was still on duty dealing with emergency calls.

MRS. EVELYN LEAVER

British Empire Medal for bravery during an air raid on Manchester. Mrs. Leaver, a midwife, was attending a patient when the doors, windows and staircase of the house were shattered by a bomb. She moved the patient to a cellar and attended her in the confinement. Mrs. Leaver is seen above with the baby.

DAVID WILEMAN

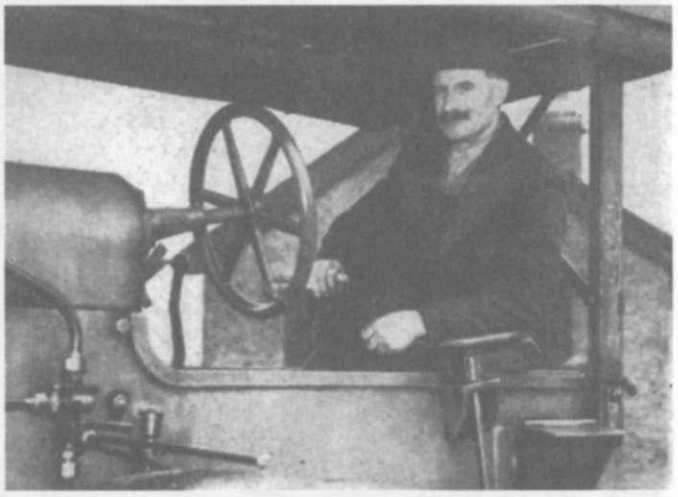
Awarded the R.S.P.C.A.'s bronze medal for tunnelling alone through the debris of a bombed house to rescue a Scotch terrier. Mr. Wileman, aged 24, Chief Animal Guard for Southgate, Middlesex, under the national A.R.P. scheme for animals, holds a rescued cat.

SAMUEL DONNER

The British Empire Medal was awarded to Air Warden Samuel Donner for an act of gallantry at Stepney on September 7, 1940, when the greatest daylight raid of the war on London was made. Mr. Donner was one of the earliest London A.R.P. workers to be decorated, and he is seen above when he returned to his home after receiving his medal in March, 1941.

SCOUT ANTHONY BONE

Anthony Bone, a member of the Holborn (London) Scout troop, receives the Scout Gilt Cross for gallantry. Scout Bone did valuable work during the great fire bomb raid on London, December 29, 1940. When not on duty in the A.R.P. control room he has gone out into the streets during raids to give what help he could.



GEORGE W. PAVELEY

Awarded the George Medal for assisting on two occasions in the removal of unexploded bombs, Mr. George William Paveley is a steam-roller driver at Chelmsford. On the first occasion he excavated down to a depth of 10 feet with a pneumatic drill to reach the bomb and drove the steam roller that dragged it out.

Photos, British Official: "Crown Copyright; G.P.U., Fox, Planet News, "Daily Mirror"

We Didn't Laugh Long at the Greeks!

The tragic conditions on the Italian front in Albania, and the consequent deep depression prevailing among the troops, were revealingly told in a diary kept by a captured Italian officer, typical extracts from which are given below.

BITTER resentment at the incompetence and ignorance which brought the Italians into such straits on the Albanian front is expressed by the officer, himself a Fascist, in his diary. He complains that the Italians were told the Greeks were cowards who could only fight when doped with brandy. His troops were physically depressed as a result of the bad distribution of food, which "disappeared in a strange fashion" on its way up to the line. He wrote:

"I was twenty days on a snow-covered height with nine men without our command sending us even a scrap of bread." Another reason for discontent was that the postal service was set up as much as fifty miles to the rear. "Letters were often lost and Christmas parcels were distributed in a scandalous manner."

The troops were kept in ignorance of the real situation. The "soldiers' wireless" announced that the Army of the Po had entered Yugoslavia and was marching on Salonika and revolution had broken out in Greece. "Finally, it gave the great news which electrified our troubled minds, news confirmed by the generals—the Duce had announced the immediate intervention of German troops on condition that we held the positions at Klisura. It was of no use for some of us to grumble at this help. We were delighted to save our own lives, we laughed at the Greeks and the face they would make when they found themselves struck in the back.

"All this happened on January 3 and 4. Then Colonel de Bensi rang up General Dave to ask him when the Germans were coming. The reply was that nothing was known of the matter. The first dreadful doubt began to creep into our minds. It was a terrible disappointment.

"Then we heard over the wireless that we had lost Cyrenaica. As if that was not enough we learned that the Julia Division had been completely cut up by the Greeks. Little by little the fatal feeling grew that we were inferior to the enemy and that it would be impossible to resist him.

"Why did the Duce not understand?" asked the officer in conclusion. "Our war was based on the mistaken conception that our entry into Greek territory would suffice to bring down the whole Greek military and political structure and to bring about a revolution. We ought to ask whether this was treason or exaggerated levity on the part of our diplomacy."—*Press Association.*

The British Navy Is Waiting for Us!

In many a neutral harbour, in the ports of Spain and of all the Americas, skulks what is left of Hitler's Merchant Navy. On board are thousands of German seamen whose life, as the following extracts from a letter written by one of them to his wife at home show, is far from a happy one.

WHAT sort of life is that of the German seamen who are kicking their heels on the German merchantmen laid up in many a neutral port? There are thousands of them, seamen who are kept going at useless work, sometimes persecuted by malicious officers, living in fear of having to put to sea and run the gauntlet of the British Navy. The boredom, anxiety and anger of these unhappy men is revealed in this letter, written to his wife by one of the crew of a ship lying in a tropical harbour.

Italian prisoners captured in Albania have, like those above, shown symptoms of low morale. The Italian diary quoted in this page shows why. *Photo, Sport & General*

"Tuesday. Another day is over. They are cleaning the hull of the Martha as though they are paid for it. Yet no one is the least interested in the job. For weeks there have been rumours that we are to weigh anchor. Probably some toff wants to distinguish himself at our expense. All the ships have fuel, water and provisions on board. This equipment must have cost a lot. But 10 marks a month is all we are allowed in foreign money. None of us, not even the simplest boy, wants to put to sea. We are all fed up. The whole day long we chip off rust, tomorrow we can drink it at the bottom of the sea, for if we sail we shall not get farther than 10 miles.

"Wednesday. You should see us work. Two at it and three looking on. Talk about good fellowship. Sooner or later we shall finish up in some British camp. I hope things turn out all right without any of the chaps being lost.

"I should like to know who decides whether the ships shall sail or not. If they cannot even afford to keep a few ships in foreign ports, why send out unarmed ships? They cannot do anything, for any fishing boat with a small gun can send us to the bottom. So if you hear of our ships having sailed, you know what it means. You know my ship, and can trace me through the Red Cross.

"Soon after the New Year (1940) strict economy was ordered. All of us, from the skipper to the boy, had to take their meals on the Martha. The ships are berthed in a row, at distances of 200 metres. Quite a procession every day. Meals were taken in the first, second, and third class quarters, ordinary folk below deck, of course, the better-class comrade citizens above. Above all, no undue familiarity between the ranks. The

I WAS THERE!

food was usually adequate, even good. But it did not last long, by the end of March the collective catering ceased.

"Certain people probably missed their pickings. Now that each ship again does its own catering they are no doubt faring better. The outfitting of six ships certainly also proved lucrative. A few days ago three ships weighed anchor. They were spotted before they had been gone for more than a few hours. Only the X, a brand-new ship, was, thanks to its speed, able to get as far as A by nightfall.

"**Thursday.** You will be wondering how I am. Fairly well as far as health is concerned. Though you cannot expect a cart-horse to become a racehorse. The officers are upset at the apathy. The other day I was called on the carpet. But if you put your foot down things are quiet again for a while. For the past few months we have had autumn weather. The mosquitoes had disappeared, so life was bearable. It was time the weather changed, for we were all covered with insect bites, and some suffered from malaria fever. Besides there were women, and the usual consequences. Patients are attended to on the Martha, which has a doctor. That's all for today. I hope you get my letter."

Such has been the life of thousands of German seamen for many months past. Day after day the same boredom, no pocket-money, and the constant fear that the captain will suddenly receive orders to run the gauntlet of the British Navy.—*International Transport Workers Federation.*

What I Saw of London's A.F.S. in Action

At the Central Fire Station they seemed to think that an A.F.S. officer from the North was a little mad to want to be attached to the London Brigade for the night. But the matter was soon arranged, and here is the visitor's account of his experiences on a typical night of Nazi attempts at fire-raising.

As soon as I arrived at the A.F.S. station the sub-officer showed me round. Upstairs there was a recreation-room with a three-quarter size billiards table hired on a weekly basis by the men. There was also a small canteen run by the men themselves. The regulars had their own quarters, and for the auxiliaries there were a large messroom, kitchen and scullery, two bathrooms, and a dormitory with thirty-six beds. Although there were only enough beds for the men actually on duty, each man is supplied with two blankets and a pillow. Every man not actually "standing to" was lying down resting. They have realized the importance in London of taking every available opportunity to rest; otherwise they could not keep going night after night in the magnificent way they do . . .

Well, the sirens have gone and I am on the roof with the sub-officer. The anti-aircraft barrage is thundering all round. To the east a German bomber drops a flare and half London seems to be lit up. The whistle of a bomb is heard and we duck behind a chimney, but the crash is not near enough to worry us. Suddenly the white glare is broken by a deep red glow. "Looks as if they have got something with an oil bomb," says the sub-officer; "it's in our district, too." The glow spreads as we make our way downstairs.

The telephone in the duty-room rings. "Stand by with three machines for —— in —— street." Another two minutes, then another ring—"Turn out!"

The Steeple a Glowing Pyramid

It is as light as day as we approach the fire. The building is well alight, and the flames are using the hole made by the oil bomb as a chimney. A church next door has caught, and soon the steeple is a glowing pyramid. The building is doomed, and all jets are concentrated on saving surrounding property. There are several jets in the church and more in the business premises at the back. Auxiliaries, with their backs to the fire, are making a curtain of water to protect the shops on the other side of the street. These premises have started to catch fire although the street is sixty feet wide. Two or three more pairs of auxiliaries are in the middle of the street using their jets to drive the flames back through the warehouse windows.

In what seems an incredibly short time the fire is under control. Two-thirds of the church has been saved and the fire stopped everywhere else. I have time to look where the water has come from and find that the only static supply has been a swimming-bath where suction hose is kept permanently installed ready to be attached to a stirrup pump. Jets are now being knocked off and machines sent back to their stations.

But this is only the beginning of the night. A senior officer takes me under his wing, and we drive back to Main Fire Control to see what is happening elsewhere. We are told of another "twenty-pump job" farther along in the same district and off we go again. It is going well, but the buildings are isolated and there is no risk of the fire spreading. There are aeroplanes overhead and the whistle of two or three bombs makes us get down flat for a moment. Rather too near to be comfortable this time! Two of them seem to be time bombs, as there is only one explosion.

Encircled by a Ring of Fires

These aeroplanes have evidently dropped a load of oil bombs, and soon we seem to be encircled in a ring of fires. The senior officer sends a messenger back for fifty more pumps to be sent, to approach the rendezvous from different directions. He also sends for his control car, which will mark the rendezvous by its flashing red lamp and will contain necessary maps and locations of water supplies. Motor-cyclist messengers are summoned as well.

Motor-cyclists are sent round to find what the fires are, who is in charge, and what appliances are there already. When the convoys of pumps arrive they are distributed to the various fires as they are required. The organization seems to be faultless; everybody knows his job. There is no excitement, no shouting, no hesitation, and in a short time every fire is surrounded and under control.

Two more churches are blazing, a school, some industrial buildings, and a small timber yard. The smoke from the two buildings is producing strange smells. I find myself on a flat roof with an L-shaped warehouse burning round me; the roof beside me is catching alight. There is no jet up here, but I find, and use, some fire extinguishers.

But everything is well in hand now. The "All Clear" is sounding. Our driver covers the seats of the car with waterproof sheets and back we go to Main Control. Before I leave the sirens go again and control prepares once more for action. But all the fires are doused before the next raiders arrive and there are no flames to guide them. —"*Manchester Guardian.*"

HOSES IN ACTION at one of the fires caused by a heavy raid on London. How London's A.F.S. thwarts the designs of the Nazi fire-raisers is vividly described by an eye-witness in this page. *Photo, Fox*

OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

SUNDAY, MARCH 23 *568th day*

ON THE SEA.—H.M. trawler Rubens reported overdue and considered lost.

IN THE AIR.—Coastal Command aircraft destroyed German barrack block at Quiberon and scored hit on escort vessel near Brest.

Heavy night raids on Berlin, Kiel and Hanover. Smaller-scale attacks on coastal targets in N.W. Germany and Holland, including naval base of Den Helder.

WAR AGAINST ITALY.—Cairo announced capture of Negelli. Enemy troop positions at Keren bombed continuously by R.A.F. Addis Ababa-Jibuti railway attacked by S.A.A.F. At night R.A.F. raided aerodrome at Tamet and shipping at Sirte (Tripolitania).

Thirteen Stukas destroyed over Malta.

HOME FRONT.—Bombs fell during day near Channel coast and at one point in N. Scotland. Three enemy aircraft destroyed. At night few bombs fell in eastern England.

GREEK WAR.—R.A.F. raided Berat. Six enemy aircraft destroyed, others damaged.

MONDAY, MARCH 24 *569th day*

IN THE AIR.—Bomber Command aircraft sank enemy vessel off Dutch coast. Coastal Command bombed Cherbourg docks.

WAR AGAINST ITALY.—Cairo reported that after beating off seven counter-attacks British troops at Karen were advancing.

Nairobi stated that our advanced troops successfully attacked strong enemy positions holding Marda Pass, west of Jijiga.

Enemy force occupied El Agheila, Libya, from which British had been withdrawn.

During night R.A.F. raided Tripoli.

HOME FRONT.—Bombs fell in S.E. Kent and S. Wales during day. Two enemy aircraft shot down.

GREEK WAR.—Italians launched unsuccessful local attack in region of Aoos River.

TUESDAY, MARCH 25 *570th day*

ON THE SEA.—Announced that Mediterranean Fleet had been operating during period March 21–24, covering convoy movements.

German merchant ship Oder, trying to escape from Massawa, reported captured by H.M. sloop Shoreham.

IN THE AIR.—Bomber Command aircraft attacked small enemy convoy off Dutch coast. A.A. ship damaged off Ameland and naval patrol vessel near Borkum bombed.

WAR AGAINST ITALY.—Imperial forces approaching Harar. Operations north-west of Negelli developing successfully.

Further positions covering Keren gained. R.A.F. carried out numerous raids supporting land operations in Eritrea and Abyssinia.

R.A.F. bombed aerodromes at Scarpanto and Calato and shipping at Astropalia island (Dodecanese).

HOME FRONT.—Enemy aircraft active round coast. Bombs fell on town on south coast and at place in West of England.

BALKANS.—Yugoslav Premier and Foreign Minister signed Axis Pact in Vienna.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26 *571st day*

ON THE SEA.—Admiralty stated that in operations by light forces in North Sea during last few nights German E-boats attacking our convoys were hit and driven off.

H.M. submarine Sturgeon reported to have sunk enemy tanker off Norway.

IN THE AIR.—Beaufort bomber torpedoed and sank enemy supply ship off Dutch coast.

WAR AGAINST ITALY.—Pressure on Keren increasing. Heavy and incessant air attacks.

R.A.F. and S.A.A.F. carried out severe raids on Addis Ababa-Jibuti railway.

HOME FRONT.—Single enemy aircraft active during day. Bombs fell in two places in West of England and at two in southern England. Two raiders destroyed.

BALKANS.—Riots in Yugoslavia following signing of Pact with Axis.

THURSDAY, MARCH 27 *572nd day*

ON THE SEA.—Admiralty announced that H.M. yacht Mollusc and H.M. trawler Lady Lilian had been sunk.

H.M.S. Leith, escorting convoy in Bristol Channel, shot down one Heinkel and damaged another.

WAR AGAINST ITALY.—Keren captured, with 1,500 prisoners. Remainder of Italian troops retreating to Asmara.

Harar occupied by British.

HOME FRONT.—Some activity by enemy aircraft during daylight. Bombs fell on towns on S.E. and S. coasts.

BALKANS.—Yugoslav Army deposed and arrested Prince Paul and members of his Government. King Peter assumed power and Gen. Simovitch formed new Cabinet.

GENERAL.—Agreement for lease to U.S. of naval and air bases in Atlantic signed in London.

FRIDAY, MARCH 28 *573rd day*

ON THE SEA.—Big naval battle in Eastern Mediterranean. Italy lost three 10,000-ton cruisers and two destroyers, and battleship of Littorio class was damaged.

Submarine Parthian reported to have torpedoed two ships in convoy south of Italy.

IN THE AIR.—R.A.F. attacked enemy shipping, operations extending from Frisian Islands to La Rochelle in Brittany. Supply ship in Alderney harbour hit. Brest naval base attacked.

WAR AGAINST ITALY.—Italian troops being pursued towards Asmara. R.A.F. bombed motor transport and troops, and targets near Asmara.

HOME FRONT.—Small-scale enemy activity during daylight. Bombs fell on S.E. coastal town. Enemy bomber shot down by fighters near Beachy Head.

BALKANS.—Nazis demanded written statement of Yugoslav policy.

FREE FRENCH 'A.T.S.'

THE Corps Féminin Français, an organization which bears the same relationship to the Free French Forces of General de Gaulle as the A.T.S. does to the British Army, was formed on November 7, 1940. Its commandant is Mme. Simone Mathieu, the world-famous tennis champion. As soon as news of its formation was made public numbers of Frenchwomen residing in England hastened to join, and it was not long before the first contingent was sent for training to an A.T.S. camp.

After a period of initial training, mostly devoted to drill and the inculcation of military discipline, members are selected for special duties according to their aptitude. Those already trained in office and secretarial work are sent where there is most need of their services. Those who wish to train as nurses can follow special courses ; others, with a mechanical bent, can serve as motor drivers and mechanics. There are instructional courses for those who wish to perfect their knowledge of the English language. Then there is always a need of cooks in the army, and what Frenchwoman does not know how to cook ?

All sorts and conditions of women have joined the Corps Féminin Français. One woman, now a corporal, once directed a famous fashion house, employing many hands, which was destroyed in the autumn "blitz." Another was among the last of the refugees to leave Saint Jean-de-Luz. Some of them have lived in England for many years ; others might never have seen England but for the war. But one and all are doing their bit, as Free Frenchwomen, to uphold the honour of their country and to play their part in the fight for Freedom by the side of those Frenchmen who refused to accept the bondage of Vichy.

FRENCHWOMEN in the Corps Féminin Français wear a uniform only slightly different from that of the A.T.S. Here some of them are seen on parade being inspected by their commandant, Mme. Simone Mathieu, when nearing the completion of their training. *Photo, L.N.A.*